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Edmonton metro

Your essential daily news | WEEKEND, DECEMBER 9-11, 2016

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metroNEWS

Sabir rejects calls for resignation

PUBLIC HEALTH

Minister says he's doing good work despite handling of 4-year-old's death



Kevin Maimann
Metro | Edmonton

Alberta's embattled Human Services minister says he is "absolutely" doing a good job, amid criticisms that he hampered a probe into the violent death of a child in government care.

Irfan Sabir is also rejecting calls from the opposition that he resign his post, saying he is committed to fixing a system that has been broken for years.

Sabir's department has been under fire in recent weeks for its handling of the death of a four-year-old girl named Serenity, who was in government-appointed kinship care when she died two years ago, showing signs of malnourishment and severe physical and sexual abuse.

He unveiled plans Thursday for a ministerial panel on child intervention

that will start making recommendations in six to eight weeks.

"Serenity's family deserves answers and Serenity deserves justice," Sabir said.

"I am not here to assign blame anywhere, I am here to talk about the solution."

But opposition parties insisted blame should be doled out and should fall squarely on the minister.

"It's irresponsible and it's unbelievable to think that no one in this government at any time over the past month picked up the phone and asked what they needed to do to speed up the investigation into the death of Serenity," said Wildrose Leader Brian Jean.

The PC Party was in power at the time of Serenity's death in 2014.

Sabir and Alberta RCMP both say an internal report on Serenity's case was delivered two working days after the police asked for it in late November, but that technical problems delayed the computer file from being opened until this week.

PC Leader Ric McIver called for a public inquiry as well as Sabir's resignation.

"If there is no blame, there is no justice," he said.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Your essential daily news

Pantone Color Institute's colour of the year for 2017 is "greenery."

IN BRIEF

Man released in noose allegation case

Police in Edmonton have released a man who was taken into custody after two women in hijabs were taunted in what investigators have said could be a hate crime.

No charges have been laid, but police say the man is still a person of interest in the case.

The women were waiting at a light-rail transit station at the University of Alberta on Nov. 8 when they were approached by a man who pulled a rope out of his pocket, fashioned a noose and said "this is for you." He sang O Canada in front of the women, who captured what happened on a cellphone.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Firearms and human trafficking charges

An Edmonton man faces multiple firearm and human trafficking-related charges for allegedly forcing a woman to work in the sex trade.

Prince Opoku, 25, is alleged to have forced a woman in her early 20s to travel to cities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta to perform sex acts for money beginning in early 2015.

EPS members from various units converged on a northeast Edmonton residence on Monday.

Opoku was arrested, charged and taken into custody. THE CANADIAN PRESS

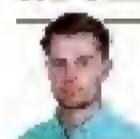


Pedestrian Deb Woudsma, who's had a few run-ins with cyclists, says more cycling infrastructure would make Edmonton safer. KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

The winter bike lane blues

TRANSIT

Study says cyclists use sidewalks when lanes aren't cleared



Jeremy Simes
Metro | Edmonton

Mark Butt says walking along Stony Plain Road as it turns into 104 Avenue near Oliver made him nervous — cyclists would narrowly swerve around him on the sidewalk.

They were "nearly forcing

me onto the road itself on many occasions," Butt said.

He added that most of the cyclists "did not even use their bells to notify me they were coming up."

Butt's comments come in light of a leaked Edmonton Police email, in which an officer says "undesirables" are cycling on sidewalks along 118 Avenue, in the city's northeast near Wayne Gretzky Drive.

Edmonton police didn't provide comment on the email or biking on sidewalks by press time.

Though the Edmonton Bicycle Commuters Society has said it generally doesn't condone cycling on sidewalks,

Edmonton is not a cyclist-friendly city.

Deb Woudsma

some riders have argued 118 Avenue is too busy and fast, and that the sidewalk is the safest option.

But as Metro is discovering, the issue of cyclists riding on sidewalks extends past 118 Avenue. It's city-wide.

Research by Manish Shirgaokar, assistant professor of urban planning at the University of Alberta, shows Edmon-

ton cyclists ride on sidewalks or the road because bike lanes are often covered by snow in the winter.

"The cyclists reported that sometimes vehicle drivers harassed them, did not obey the traffic rules, and were generally unaware of how to share the road with cyclists," according to Shirgaokar's research paper.

His research found that some experienced cyclists also rode there because they were wary of the lack of space on main roads during the winter.

Pedestrian Deb Woudsma has had a few run-ins with riders cycling on the sidewalk.

"I'm amazed and annoyed when cyclists, heading east,

get upset when you do not move out of their way — they are riding on the sidewalk," she said. "Edmonton is not a cyclist-friendly city."

More bike lanes would help reduce such conflicts, she said.

"When one considers the environment, financial, and even health issues, cycling infrastructure is imperative for all citizens in a city that I assume is progressive," she said. "It's about safety, too."

Edmonton is geared to install a new cycling grid by next summer. There will be lanes along 104 Avenue, 102 Avenue and 100 Avenue, and on 106 Street, 103 Street and 99 Street.

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Council to allocate \$5 M fund

BUDGET

But requests from arts, poverty groups total \$11 M

Jeremy Simes
Metro | Edmonton

Budget deliberations heated up at city council Thursday, with organizations going to bat for a share of the money the city can set aside for new programs.

Representing causes from arts to ending poverty, almost a dozen groups went before Council to make their pitch for funding.

Council's decision will be tough — it only has \$5 million to work with, which is nowhere near the \$11 million that would be required to green light every new funding package.

Complicating things further, is the fact that money could also go towards reducing the proposed 3.1 per



The Edmonton Arts Council's Catherine Crowstone says she's confident the Art Gallery of Alberta will receive funds to try new admission-fee pilots. JEREMY SIMES/METRO

cent tax hike. To give a sense of the task facing councilors, Metro breaks down the organizations' sales pitches, and why they think funding

their program would go a long way in improving Edmonton.

Who makes the cut will be decided Friday.

Art Gallery of Alberta — \$250,000

The AGA is asking for \$250,000 to offer free admission to their exhibits to

everyone. The gallery has seen a major spike in visitors when it's waived fees for special events in the past. Catherine Crowstone, with the Edmonton Arts Council, argued everyone in the city deserves to be able to afford to visit the gallery. She said if the gallery can attract more visitors, they'll be more sustainable in future.

New "out-of-the-box" museum — \$280,000

The Edmonton Heritage Council came back this year asking for \$280,000 to launch a city museum that wouldn't actually be in a physical building. Beth Sanders, vice chair with the Heritage Council, said organizers would offer tours, lectures and screenings across the city.

The new museum would push the boundaries about what a museum is, she said, and explore more than just the "white male" lens. She adds it could delve into truth and reconciliation, and the perspectives of newcomers. Sanders said heri-

age council would have to back off the idea if council says no.

End Poverty Edmonton — \$1.7 million

The anti-poverty initiative is requesting \$1.7 million for 2017 and an additional \$1.2 million in 2018. The funds would go to a variety of projects, all aimed at boosting 10,000 people out of poverty in the next five years — something that would have a huge benefit for the city, according to End Poverty's Jane Alexander.

River Valley Alliance — \$70,000

The non-profit that promotes the River Valley is asking for a \$70,000 increase to its budget, as it will no longer receive its provincial grant in 2018.

The alliance needs the money for boat launches and to pay off the Terwillegar Footbridge and new trails. Chris Sheard, with the group, said he wasn't sure what would happen if it received no funding.



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Jon Sharun, one of the partners in Crash Hotel, says it's about livening up the communal spaces, in addition to nice rooms.

KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

Boutique hotel for millenials opening

BUSINESS

New art-based venture finds home in old Grand Hotel



Alex Boyd
Metro | Edmonton

The Crash Hotel opening up across the street from Rogers Place isn't your parents' hotel — and according to the owners, that's exactly the point.

"In the new age of millennials and Gen Xers, they want to feel connected to people and that's what this is all about," said Jon Sharun of Venexo Capital, one of the partners.

Meaning? A hotel that is as much about the communal

space as it is about the rooms.

On Thursday the last coats of varnish were being painted on the large wooden bar that will soon offer coffee in the morning and cocktails at night. Padded seating in the café was in the final stages of installation.

Sharun pointed to wires sticking out of the floor that will soon connect to plug-ins at communal tables for people to sit with their phones or computers.

The café also connects to Denizen Hall, so people will be able to go back and forth.

"We want to bring the community experience down into the lobby, it's not a case where everyone goes up to their room and watches TV," he said.

The rooms are also a nod to a more price-conscious generation. Some have bunk beds and a shared bathroom, though there are also suites with a window



Each room has its own unique art. KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

looking out at Rogers Place.

Notably, each has its own theme: one has a wall made entirely out of audio speakers, another out of vintage suitcases.

One has a sprawling octopus painted above the bed, another "Pugs, not Drugs," alongside a picture of a frowning dog. Yet another has two blank walls for people at an opening party to draw on.

Sharun said that as excited as they are to be next door to the shiny new arena, they looked to the past for décor inspiration.

"We wanted to go against the grain, and not knock the building down and build a glass tower," he said. "It's from 1904, so there's more than a 100-year history here," he said.

Renovations have been extensive — they're focusing on only 25 rooms so far — but Sharun said they've kept as much of the historic bones of the building as possible. Meaning the old heaters, the original doors and some of the paneling.

"We've had a vision for this right from the beginning, and we're really excited for this to come to fruition," he said.

The hotel plans to have its first set of rooms, starting at about \$100 a night, available for New Year's Eve.

IN BRIEF

Decoration Grinch stealing family's holidays cheer

An Edmonton Grinch is stealing Christmas.

Police say someone is taking holiday decorations off of homes from around a south Edmonton neighbourhood.

Edmonton Police might have a lead, though — a suspect was caught on surveillance.

Anyone who has had their decorations stolen should report the crime to the EPS, police said, and anyone with tips should get in touch. METRO

HEALTH

Information critical to changing ER wait perceptions, says survey

Darren Krause
Metro | Calgary

Information could be the key to improving Albertans' perceptions of emergency room wait times, according to a new survey.

The survey, commissioned by the Alberta Medical Association for its albertapatients.ca initiative, shows a vast majority of Albertans say that their wait in provincial emergency rooms is long, but most indicated their

personal wait times at ERs were between one to three hours.

Wait times in Alberta ERs have a direct impact on all aspects of a person's overall rating of provincial emergency rooms, essentially stating that the longer the wait, the less satisfaction with ERs.

More than 80 per cent of 1,350 people in an online research panel said their wait in Alberta ERs was either "fairly long" or "very long."

The survey does show that improvements could be made with how information is passed

along to potential patients — thus modifying their expectations for emergency room visits.

"A lot of it has to do with expectations and the amount of information you get before and during your trip to an emergency room," said Henry.

According to the survey, seven in 10 people don't recall being given a wait time estimate when they were registered.

Nearly 3 in 4 respondents also said their assessed priority level wasn't communicated to them by a nurse or medical staff member.



Nice teeth — but how much do you pay to maintain them in Alberta? METRO FILE

Dental fees higher here

HEALTH

Hygienists paid up to \$18/hour more than elsewhere

A government review has found that Albertans are paying more than other Canadians to go to the dentist, but the province is stopping short of regulating fees.

Instead, the NDP government says it will work with dentists to develop a fee guide to allow patients to shop around for services.

The review found that the average costs of 49 procedures are up to 44 per cent higher in Alberta than in British Columbia, up to 38 per cent more than in Saskatchewan and up to 25 per cent more than in Ontario.

Albertans in general are higher income earners on average than other parts of the coun-

try, but that doesn't mean that we should be seeing exorbitant rates," Health Minister Sarah Hoffman said Thursday.

"We are looking at what's working in other jurisdictions and one of the pieces there is a fee guide."

Dr. Mintoo Basabti, president-elect of the Alberta Dental Association and College, joined Hoffman for the announcement. He seemed to take issue with some of the review's cost comparisons.

"We acknowledge in Alberta that fees may generally be higher, but if you look at it across the board, it's probably no more than 15 to 20 per cent."

It does cost more for dentists to operate in Alberta. The review says hygienists are paid up to \$18 an hour more than in the rest of the country and assistants are paid up to \$10 an hour more.

Costs for materials and rent are also higher.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

INVESTIGATION

Police seek two men in road rage incident

Calgary police are looking for two men who allegedly beat a woman with a hockey stick in a road rage incident Wednesday evening.

According to CPS, the victim was driving a black Dodge Caravan south of 4 Street NW near the intersection of 40 Avenue NW around 5:20 p.m. Wednesday.

A silver BMW attempted to pass her but failed due to oncoming traffic, and then began aggressively following the woman.

According to police, when she arrived at the West Mount Pleasant Arena, the BMW boxed in the vehicle, and two men got out of the BMW. The

two demanded the woman get out of the car and fight them, and when she refused they allegedly used a hockey stick to break the windows in her vehicle.

The victim's child was also in the car at the time.

The victim tried to flee in her car, but ran into the BMW. Police said she was then pulled from her car and assaulted by the two men, who used the hockey stick to hit her.

The suspect's vehicle is described as silver, two-door BMW car with an Alberta licence plate. Police say it will likely have extensive damage to the front passenger side and possibly the front bumper. METRO

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- In a medium saucepan, heat the cream over medium heat to a gentle simmer. Remove from heat and add chopped chocolate. Swirl the cream so that the chocolate is covered. Allow to sit for 2 minutes.
- Gently whisk until smooth, serve immediately.

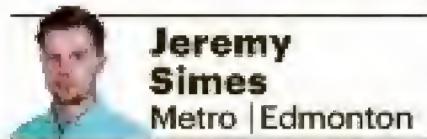
- Set out a large variety of treats to dip into the chocolate.

Tip: Use any fruits or baked goods of your choice. We suggest berries, bananas, melons, oranges, pineapple, croissants and sliced pound cake.

save on foods

CONSTRUCTION

Rabbit Hill Road widening to start 2018

**Jeremy Simes**

Metro | Edmonton

Coun. Bryan Anderson is feeling good after council approved \$4.5 million Thursday to widen Rabbit Hill Road to four lanes between Anthony Henday Drive and 23 Avenue in the city's south end.

Traffic swelled by 8,000 vehicles per day over two years at pinch-points on that road,

as south Edmonton continues to grow.

Rabbit Hill Road, which is mostly twinned, still has a 1.6-kilometre section of single-lane each way that runs past the MacTaggart neighbourhood.

On that single-lane section alone, traffic spiked to 22,500 vehicles per day in 2015.

Anderson said the funds, which will twin those single lanes, will be a major relief for commuters who drive on that section.

"It's been a source of a lot of neighbourhood angst," Anderson said Thursday. "That one section is probably approaching 30,000 vehicles now."

There are also 1 6 5 buses per day that travel along

\$4.5M

Council approved \$4.5 million to widen Rabbit Hill Road.

Rabbit Hill Road, Anderson added.

"We've got 1,630 residential units coming on stream in the very, very near future and a new school that will have 900 students who will have to use this piece of road," he said.

Construction on the lane widening will begin in 2018, as engineers will now begin design work for the widening.

Council also made way for construction of the 135 street interchange and the Henday.



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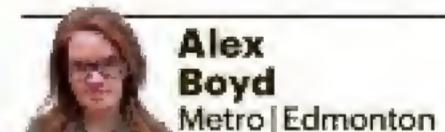
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Researchers say tax soda

HEALTH

Most Albertans would be OK with that: Survey

**Alex Boyd**

Metro | Edmonton

A group of researchers devoted to tackling chronic disease is calling on the Alberta government to tax pop and energy drinks.

The Alberta Policy Coalition for Chronic Disease Prevention, made up of researchers and practitioners, recently surveyed 1,200 Albertans and found that 58 per cent supported a tax on sugar-heavy drinks as a way to reduce consumption.

They're pushing for an additional tax of 50 cents per litre on the sugary stuff.

Coalition co-lead Kim Raine, a professor at the U of A's school of public health, said taxes employed in other parts of the world have led to reductions in consumption of between 10 and 20 per cent.

"It is one means of many — it's not going to solve the

obesity problem, that's for sure, and taxation is one policy that has been used in other jurisdictions."

Last month, the World Health Organization endorsed taxes on sugary drinks as a way to reduce health problems like obesity, Type 2 diabetes and tooth decay.

Four American cities recently voted in favour of the strategy.

Raine said many people end up switching to water instead of paying extra for pop.

"It's not a regressive tax, it doesn't put people at risk, because if you stop buying pop in most places in Canada you can get free drinking water."

She added that in economically challenging times, the province could also benefit from the additional revenue, which could be used to pay for nutritional programs.

Five years ago, the Coalition calculated that Alberta would make \$185 million from a 50 cent soda tax, assuming consumption decreased 20 per cent, and Raine said the figure is likely larger now.

Ipsos Reid surveyed Albertans on sugary drinks on behalf of the U of A's School of Public Health.



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Pot tourism hanging in the balance

MARIJUANA

Would-be weed entrepreneurs await federal framework

Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

Although not clear how pot legalization will go down, Albertans are already planning to piggyback business on the marijuana economy.

In Colorado, when pot was decriminalized in the state, their local tourism board didn't touch the stuff, because it's not federally legal. Yet if you plan a trip to the toking state, there are many services purporting to be 420 friendly.

And according to Minister of Justice and Solicitor General Kathleen Ganley, because of the state's restrictions on smoking outside, and of course, in restaurants, they quickly found the edibles market exploding.

That one legislative example can give you an idea of how many different scenarios could play out for small businesses, depending

on how the government legalizes weed.

There are still a lot of unknowns: whether regular businesses will be able to carry pot products, or if it will take a specialized licence for weed dispensary type shops.

"These are the sorts of things we need to be thoughtful about," Mayor Naheed Nenshi told reporters last week after the release of a Metro ThinkHQ poll about Albertans pot preferences.

"From a very practical point of view, if this actually creates a new craft industry, or small business, that's not a bad thing in this economy — we just have to figure out the right way to do it to ensure people's safety."

But when it comes to niche markets, and diversifying the economy, Ganley says places like Colorado only saw a small bump in GDP. And because Alberta would be competing with the rest of Canada for tourism dollars, it's still unclear how weed legalization will play out.

"Certainly, an industry is likely to develop, the federal government will have some piece of regulation of it, and the province will have a piece," she said. "It would be an additional industry, potentially... every little bit



Lisa Kirkman shows off the toking lounge set up in her home, where she hopes the local pot community can coalesce. HELEN PIKE/METRO

counts, but it didn't make a huge (economic) impact in Colorado."

A report published in October by the Marijuana Policy Group, an economic and market research firm that has University of Colorado researchers, however, stated Colorado reaped a \$2.39-billion economic reward tied to the marijuana economy.

In Victoria, there's already a pocket of tourism to attract a host of pot connoisseurs — at their own risk. As the Canadian Press reported, possession is still illegal, but "vapour lounges" still welcome patrons to bring their own goods, sit down, and enjoy a toke.

And the same sort of culture

is bubbling in Calgary, although in a more underground fashion. There's already one "toking lounge" in the city, but it's held in a private home and is the head office for the Calgary Cannabis Society. There, Lisa Kirkman said both medicinal users, and recreational, can enjoy a safe space to consume cannabis, and take a

dab from their "dab bar."

"If you don't have a culture that's acceptable to anyone, other than hanging out in your buddy's basement, or even out in the alleyway, or in a park or something like that, you don't have cannabis tourism," said Kirkman. "Whether or not you have places to buy marijuana here, it's pretty irrelevant."

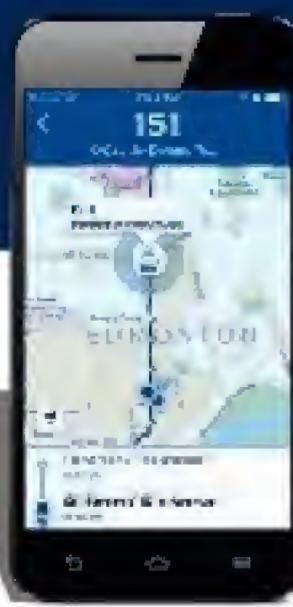
She said no one has had a problem buying marijuana in Calgary, but what's going to bring in tourism, it's the place to use it, and the people to use it with.

The lounge security checks that people entering are 18 or older, unless they have a medical licence. They don't buy or sell anything on the premises and alcohol is not permitted.

Their methods are similar to a very public toke lounge in Ottawa, which actually opened in 2015 and shut down the same summer due to smoking bylaw changes. That space ran based on a membership fee, which allowed users to enter the storefront and smoke their own cannabis. Then, users had access to board games, video games and vapourizers.

According to Calgary police, they will continue to enforce the current letter of the law, and won't be turning a blind eye.

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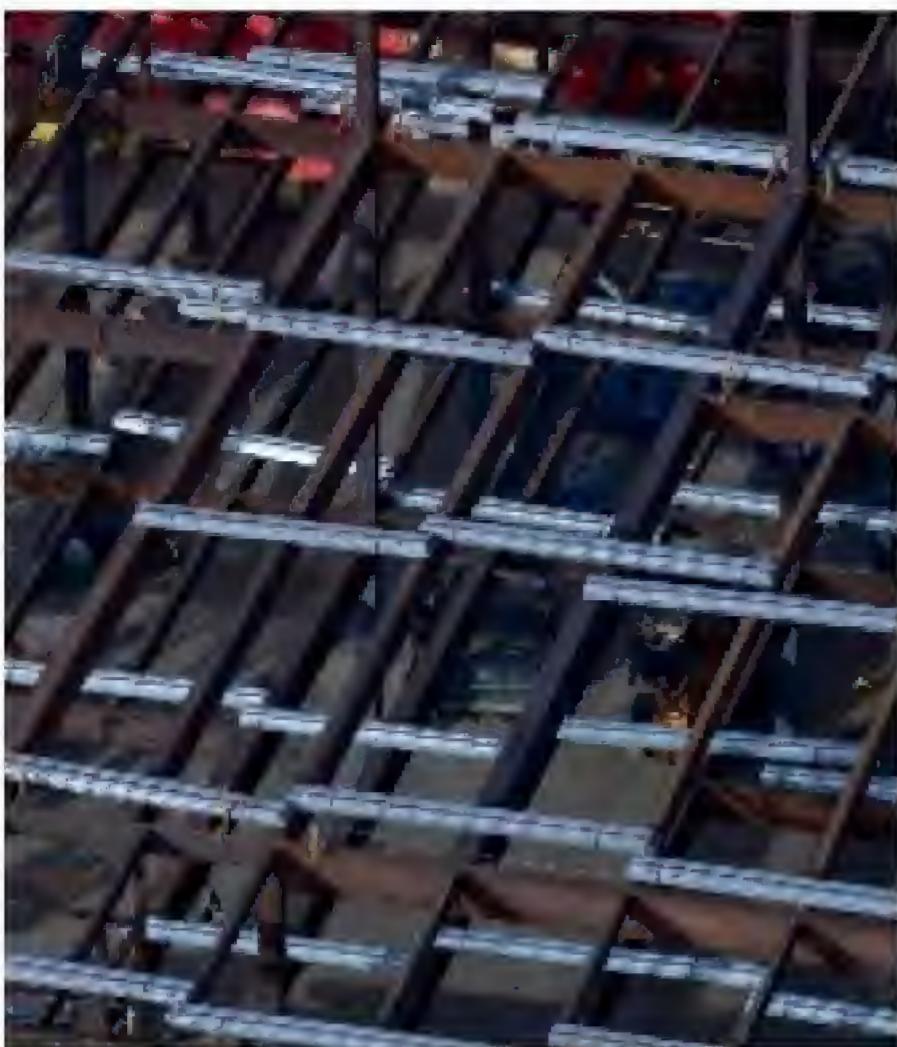


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In mining, oil and gas, utilities work, construction and manufacturing, women make up a small portion of the overall workforce. METRO FILE

Scholarship for skills

EDUCATION

Award meant to encourage women to pursue trades

Sarah Boyles
For Metro | Edmonton

Katerina Sanders is pursuing a career as an industrial insulator with the help of a new scholarship.

The second-year student at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) in Edmonton is one of 15 women studying skilled trades who've been awarded a \$2,000 scholarship, through a partnership between NAIT, Unifor and Coca-Cola.

With this bursary, I am able to pay for my next period of training and catch up a bit.

Katerina Sanders

"I've always been interested in the trades because they provide long term careers," she said.

"I got into insulating by literally cold calling different unions until I found [one] and they let me join."

This scholarship in Alberta is the second its kind. Earlier this year, Unifor and Coca-Cola announced a similar scholarship for women enrolled in skilled trades at Sheridan College's Centre for Advanced Manufacturing and Design Technologies in Brampton, Ontario.

"During my schooling, finances were tight," Sanders said. "If anyone has ever been on E.I. they know it is barely enough to survive. Between rent, bills and car insurance,

everything adds up. I got by but definitely went further into debt. With this bursary, I am able to pay for my next period of training and catch up a bit."

The scholarship is designed to encourage women to enter the trades and become skilled professionals.

Women only compose a small portion of the trades workforce, according to Statistics Canada.

In mining, oil and gas, utilities work, construction and manufacturing, women make up a small portion of the overall workforce.

For Sanders, the scholarship is further motivation and encouragement to pursue her career goals.

RECREATION

City hosting first Canadian Mountain Fest

Alex Boyd
Metro | Edmonton

Whether your interest is glaciers, climbing or bison, the first annual Canadian Mountain Festival that's heading to Edmonton next week is aiming to have something for you.

"The festival is a public event, everything is open to the public, tickets are free," said Jeff Kavanaugh, a glaciologist and

associate professor at the U of A, as well as co-lead of the new Canadian Mountain Network, which is hosting the event.

The festival features talks, film screenings, art shows and even a rock-climbing workshop, with most events at the University of Alberta. Things kick off Sunday in celebration of International Mountain Day on Dec. 11.

The University of Alberta is currently on a mission to become a hub for research on all things mountain. The U of A Mountain

Initiative started bringing experts in everything from ecology to history together back in 2011.

The Canadian Mountain Network was formed this year to start sharing knowledge across the country. Experts from different fields are all sharing their knowledge for the festival.

"The mountains strike us all with awe, we all want to be there," Kavanaugh said. "If you love the mountains, you love them for many different reasons, so the fact that I study glaciers

and a colleague of mine studies the history of mountaineering, doesn't mean we have a different interest — we just have different areas of expertise."

The festival will see an evening dedicated to discussion of bison returning to Banff National Park. There will also be a discussion of indigenous narratives on land connection and a climbing competition.

Most events are free, but require a ticket reserved through internationalmountainday.ca.

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As a journeyman pipefitter, Chris searched for opportunities to advance his career in an economic downturn. NAIT's part-time Project Management Certificate, paired with his Journeyman ticket, opened doors to a promotion. Chris is now a mechanical planner and uses the skills he gained to help grow a part-time consulting business.

Read Chris's story at nait.ca/chris

WE ARE
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TO ALBERTA



NAIT business school instructor Keven McGhan offers his holiday party dos and don'ts.

KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

How to schmooze at the office party

ETIQUETTE

Hint: Keep your distance from the tequila shots

 **Kevin Maimann**
Metro | Edmonton

Ask not what the office party can do for you, but what you can do for the office party.

A business school instructor at NAIT says there are a few things employees should keep in mind before hitting the booze at their work Christmas parties this month.

The most important point is not making it all about yourself.

"We should focus on what value we can add to the event, rather than focusing on what

we can get out of the event," said instructor Keven McGhan.

"When you're having a conversation with someone, focus on finding out about them, talking about them, being generous with your questions. And finding out if there's things that you can do or people that you know that might help to strengthen relationships and create opportunities for other people."

Active listening will bring you greater success if you want to build relationships that will improve your work life — and maybe even get you in the running for a promotion, he said.

But that could all go out the

 **We should focus on what value we can add to the event.**

Keven McGhan

window with a few too many drinks.

McGhan said it's important to remember that you are "basically still at work" when you're at an office party, and the acceptable level of buzz depends mostly on your office environment.

"Some smaller companies have a bit more of a family feel and maybe it's a little bit more casual. But you need to be in touch with what the culture of the upper management of the company is," he said.

While inappropriate party behaviour could get you fired, it could also just make things weird on Monday — and for many days to come.

"If your reputation from the office party leaves you as a person that other people don't respect or aren't comfortable dealing with, then it's going to be hard to get your job done," McGhan said.

EDMONTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Got an hour? Learn to code

Lydia Zvyagintseva is part of a library campaign to teach the average Edmontonian to code.

Zvyagintseva is a member of a digital literacy team at the Edmonton Public Library that's now hosting what they're calling 'Hour of Code' tutorial sessions.

It's as it sounds: Participants learn to code for an hour.

"Obviously print literacy is huge but a core mission of the library is (also) fostering digital literacy," Zvyagintseva said. "We live in an age where technology touches every area of our life and this is another way to sup-

port literacy."

Coding is how we tell computers, apps and websites what we want them to do.

According to a 2015 report from the Information and Communications Technology Council, by 2019 there will be more than 180,000 Canadian jobs requiring coding skills that will go unfilled by Canadians due to the lack of people with the necessary skills.

The report also cites that, in the same time frame, Edmonton will have more than 4,000 jobs that require coding know-how.

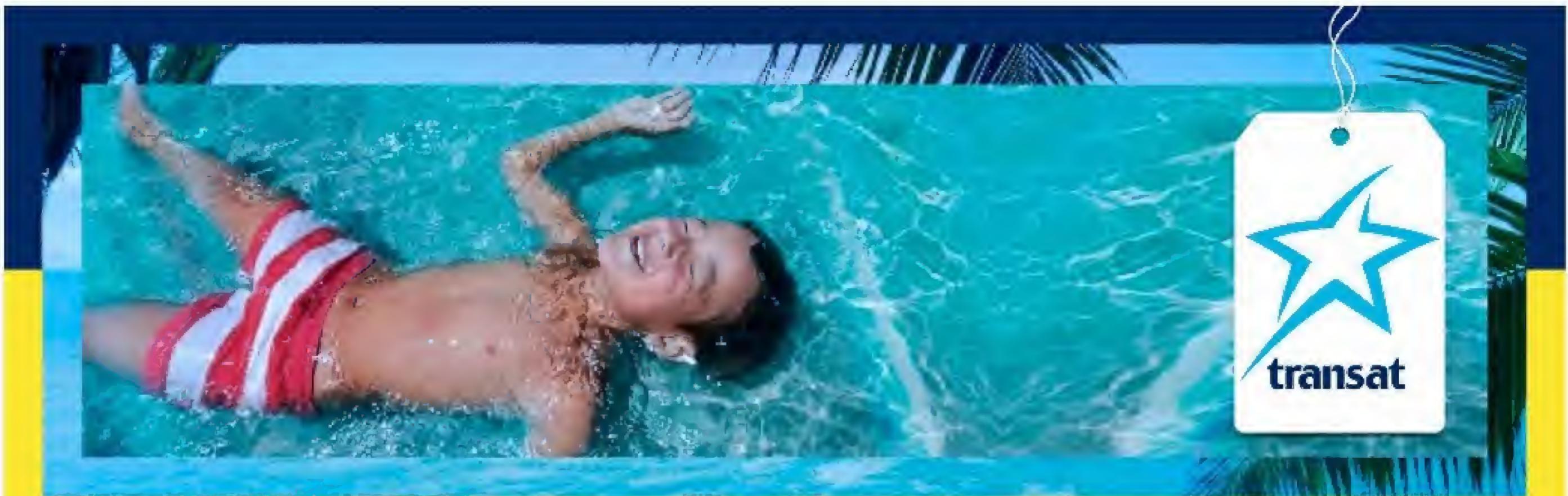
Zvyagintseva said she doesn't anticipate everyone will become coders or developers after the tutorials.

But, she said, it's important to support residents trying to make sense of the changing world.

"Understanding how technology around us — whether it's websites or apps on our mobile devices — work (and) why they do what they do, gives us incredible power," she said.

The next Hour of Code session is on Saturday, December 10 at 2 p.m. in the Lois Hole Library.

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Baking up indie business

DEVELOPMENT

Independents bringing life to city's Ritchie neighbourhood

Sarah Hoyle
For Metro | Edmonton

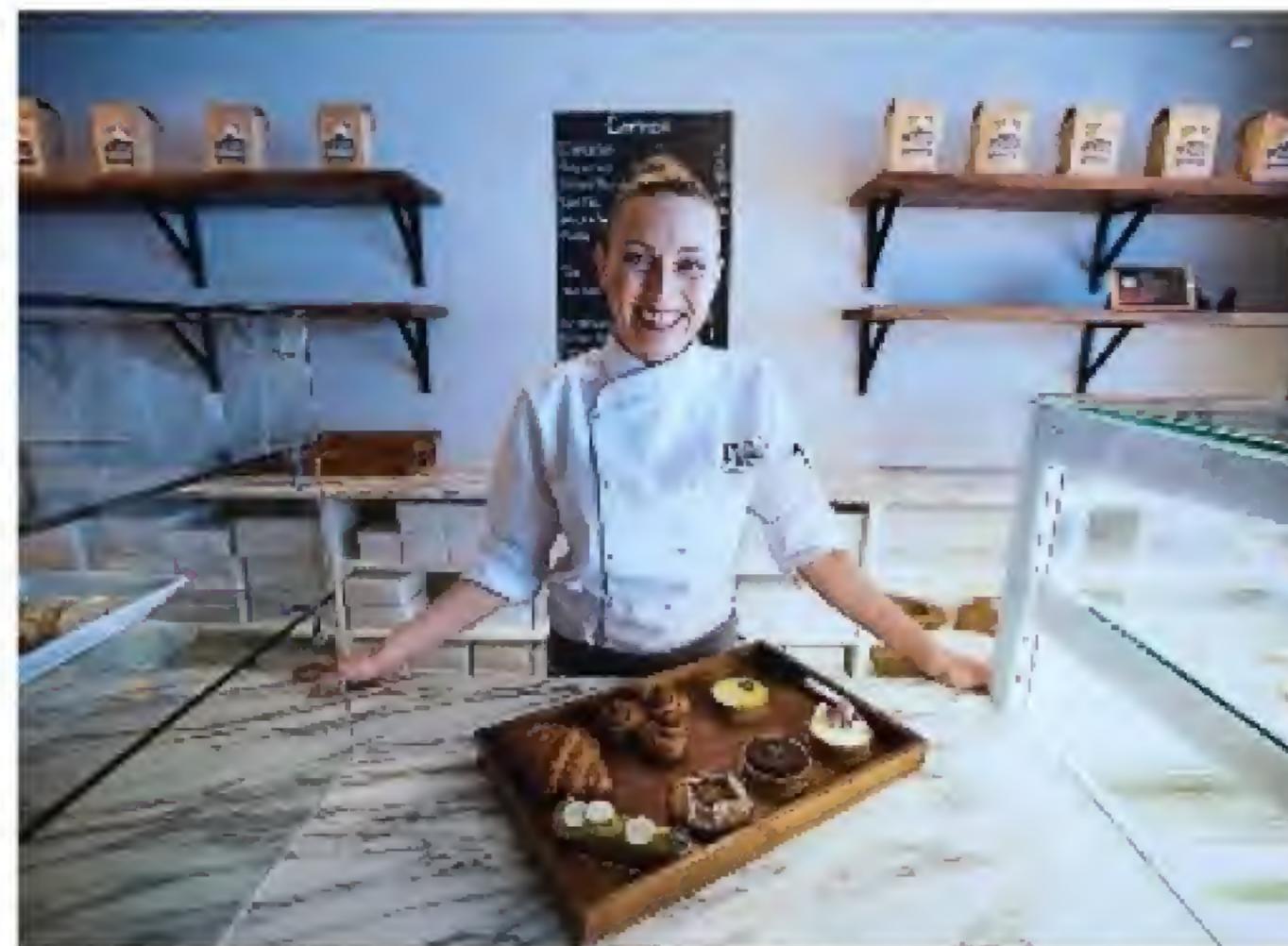
Jennifer Stang is the pastry chef at a new bakery in a south central Edmonton neighbourhood that is full of change.

Stang helped open La Boule this past Tuesday with tarts, cakes and éclairs on the menu.

The shop is east of the old railway tracks and south of Whyte Avenue where underutilized buildings and warehouses have stood for years.

But this section of the Ritchie neighbourhood is increasingly switching over to independent shops and businesses.

Stang said the boutique feel of the street is what drew her to the spot after a citywide



Jennifer Stang is a pastry chef at La Boule, which opened its doors this past Tuesday.

KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

search that took more than six months.

"The south side doesn't

really have a patisserie but we looked everywhere for a space. We found this place, on

a quiet little street, really close to Whyte Ave..," Stang said. "It really seems to be becoming

boutique-y — we really wanted to be around independents."

Ritchie is embracing the redevelopment that La Boule is a part of.

Caroline Belanger with the community's board of directors said independent business is adding to the neighbourhood.

"It's an asset," she said. "It forms a vibrant and strong, supportive community between the residents and the businesses."

Ritchie is also home to Timbre, the new co-working and workshop space, as well as a plan to revitalize the community hall building and the Four Corners project, where Transcend Coffee, ACME Meats, a bike shop and a brewpub are currently under construction.

IN BRIEF

Economy grows: Board

The Conference Board of Canada says it expects Alberta to emerge from one of the worst recessions to ever hit the province next year. However, the independent research organization is forecasting only modest economic recovery in 2017.

The board says Alberta should see real gross domestic product growth of about 2.2 per cent.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Stolen ashes of little boy recovered by police

Police have returned the ashes of a young southern Alberta boy to his family after they were stolen along with a purse from a Calgary pub. Hunter Hudson was almost a year old when he drowned earlier this year and his mom carries his ashes everywhere.

Calgary police say surveillance footage from the pub shows two women near the table just before the purse disappeared.

On Wednesday, police recovered both the purse and the ashes.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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WHAT'S GOING ON

Shop during day, visit the zoo at night

FRIDAY

WHAT: Good Ol' Hockey Game

OilersNation and West Edmonton Mall present a free NHL viewing party where fans can cheer on the blue and orange against the Minnesota Wild while enjoying food and drinks.

WHERE: West Edmonton Mall Ice Palace, 8882 170 St.

WHEN: Event starts Friday at 2 p.m., Game goes 6 to 9 p.m.

ALL WEEKEND

WHAT: Royal Bison Craft and

Art Fair

The biannual festival showcases some of the best and most unusual art, craft and design created by Edmontonians.

WHERE: 8426 Gateway Blvd.

WHEN: Friday 5 to 9 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

WHAT: The Dress Writer Prairie dance maverick Robin Poitras has teamed with Governor General Award Winner Rober Racine for a theatre pro-

duction inspired by the poetry of Clifford Wiens.

WHERE: Timms Centre for the Arts, 87 Avenue and 112 Street

WHEN: Friday and Saturday night from 8 to 10 p.m.

WHAT: Zoominescence, A Festival of Light

Light installations will snake around a skating rink, maze, fire dancers, nightly DJs and 10 artist installations.

WHERE: Edmonton Valley Zoo, 13315 Buena Vista Rd.

WHEN: Friday through Dec. 18.

SUNDAY

WHAT: Joy to the World: a Christmas Concert to Fight Human Trafficking

The third annual concert to fight human trafficking at home will feature Joe Nolan, Lucette, Kimberley MacGregor and more.

WHERE: Trinity Baptist Church, 22550 Twp Rd 530, Sherwood Park

WHEN: Sunday at 6:30 p.m.

METRO



Lawren Stewart Harris, *Untitled*, c. 1951. Oil on canvas. Art Gallery of Alberta Collection. It was purchased in 1982 with funds donated by the Women's Society of the Edmonton Art Gallery. COURTESY AGA

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Harris buzz a boost for gallery

ART

Interest since Group of Seven artist's work fetched \$11M

Lucy Haines
For Metro | Edmonton

The recent buzz over Group of Seven painter Lawren Harris could be a boon for the Art Gallery of Alberta.

One of Harris' paintings recently fetched a record (for a Group of Seven painter) \$11 million at auction, and Hollywood actor Steve Martin is one of many who count the painter as one of their favourites.

The resulting mainstream interest in Harris, then, has the gallery feeling wealthy with what you seek — they've got a Harris (or more accurately, a bunch of them) for you to come inspect.

"It's exciting for the Canadian art market, the most a

Canadian artist has ever fetched for a piece," the gallery's executive director and chief curator, Catherine Crowston, said.

"It's a significant sale and makes quite a splash. I'd rather if people paid more attention to the inherent value of the painting and not the dollar value, but it gets people's attention."

Crowston said that while the publicity around Harris' landscape-focused works may bring curious art-watchers into the building, the true value is in why the Canadian artist is so revered.

"Many of his earlier works are inspired by the mountains in Alberta. His later works are much more abstract, but the international attention shines a spotlight on all of it," Crowston said.

The AGA has five Harris paintings and 11 Harris drawings in its collection. His painting *Mountain Forms* sold for \$11.2 million recently — though few discussed how it is a painting of Banff's Mount Ishbel, in the Sawback mountain range of the Rockies. The buyer was anonymous.

IN BRIEF

Police officer's widow moving back to England

Claire Woodall, the widow of an Edmonton police officer killed on the job last year, says she's moving back to England with her children for awhile.

She says it's been hard raising her two young boys on her own and she wants to be closer to family. "The

boys are Canadian and it will always be my home. But sometimes you have to follow your heart and do what is calling you."

Const. Daniel Woodall was shot in June 2015 while trying to serve an arrest warrant at the home of a man under investigation for anti-Semitic bullying.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Desmond to grace \$10 bill

MONEY

Activist defied the rules and sat in 'whites-only' section

It had been some time since Viola Desmond last visited the cinema.

The hairdresser and entrepreneur opted to sit close to the front of the theatre; her poor eyesight made it difficult to see from the balcony, the section where black people were expected to sit in those days.

"She wanted to see a movie," Wanda Robson, 89, said Thursday as she recalled the historic day in 1946 when her older sister chose to defy the rules and sit in the Nova Scotia theatre's "whites-only" section.

Given all that followed, Robson said, Desmond would have been honoured to see herself on the \$10 bill — a tribute that will make its debut in 2018 when she becomes the first Canadian woman to be celebrated on the face of her country's currency.

"Viola Desmond's own story reminds all of us that big change can start with a moment of dignity and bravery," Finance Minister Bill Morneau said as he unveiled the choice during a news conference in Gatineau, Que.

"She represents courage, strength and determination — qualities we should all aspire to every day."

Desmond is often described as the Canadian version of Rosa Parks, although her act of defiance and subsequent arrest took place much earlier and in a much more spontaneous way than the historic 1955 events of Montgomery, Ala.

She had found herself with



Wanda Robson speaks about her sister, Viola Desmond, on Thursday. Desmond will be the first Canadian woman on a Canadian banknote. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

some rare time off from her business running a barbershop and hairdressing salon with her husband, and decided to catch a movie at what turned out to be a racially segregated theatre in New Glasgow, N.S.

"She said, 'I stretched out and I was just getting comfortable, and I thought, 'Oh, this is nice, and I won't worry about anything,' and then this usher came up and told her she couldn't sit there," Robson said in an interview.

Desmond was arrested and fined. Her decision to fight the charges in court inspired later generations of black people in Nova Scotia and the rest of Canada. The Nova Scotia government granted her a posthumous pardon in 2010.

Despite long-standing comparisons to Parks, the U.S. civil rights hero who refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white passenger, Desmond's story received little attention until recent years.

Viola Desmond's own story reminds all of us that big change can start with a moment of dignity and bravery.

Bill Morneau

Unlike Parks, who was part of a well-organized protest movement seeking its day in court, Desmond's act was a singular act of courage, he added.

Desmond would have wanted no part of that anyway, said Robson. Civil rights activists pressed Desmond to take up their cause, but she preferred to make it her "life's mission" to be a hairdresser and mentor to other black women who were often turned away from other salons, Robson said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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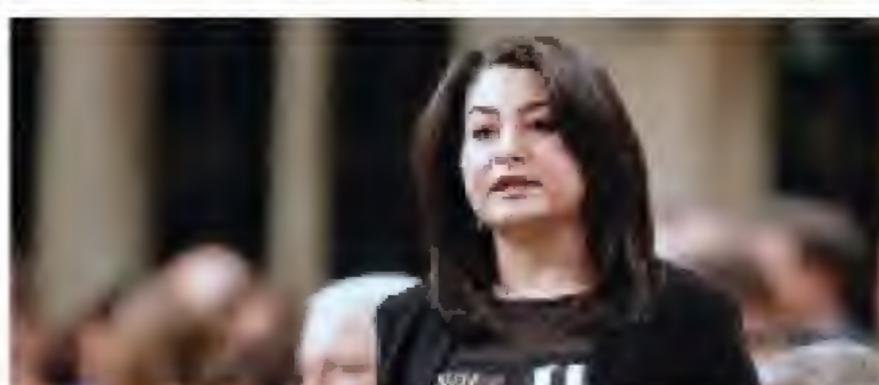
ELECTIONS

Canada has a long history of reform

If you think Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will keep his repeated promise to change the voting system before the next election, consider this: Ottawa has flirted with reform for almost a century — at least eight reports on the way we vote federally have been produced since 1921, each recommending some form of change.

And yet, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

But some Canadian jurisdictions have managed to toss out the voting system we inherited from Britain, where the person who receives the most votes in each riding gets elected. Aside from a smattering of municipalities that have experimented



Minister of Democratic Institutions Maryam Monsef in the House of Commons on Monday. FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

over the years, Manitoba and Alberta had alternatives to this First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) system from the 1920s to the 1950s. So did British Columbia for elections in 1952 and 1953.

It's a little-known history that political scientists and advocates

for reform say is worth dredging, given the current brouhaha over electoral change in the capital.

"I think it's a fascinating story, very instructive," said Dennis Pilon, a York University professor who studies the history and politics of electoral reform.

Biden urges Trudeau to be a stalwart in new world

U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden called on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to be a defender of the international "rules of the road" to help shepherd the world through a period of deep uncertainty.

Biden delivered that message in a stirring speech at a state dinner in his honour in Ottawa on Thursday night, in which he singled out the fight against climate change as the most important issue of this generation.



it's going to take men like you, Mr. Prime Minister.

Joe Biden

Biden didn't mention president-elect Donald Trump by name but he made veiled references to the uncertainty gripping Europe and the United States since Britain's decision to leave the European Union and the recent presidential election in his own country.

Biden said the world would make enormous progress — but only if leaders such as Trudeau and German Chancellor Angela Merkel stepped up.

"The changes that are going to take place are going to be astronomical," Biden said.

"The progress is going to be made but it's going to take men like you, Mr. Prime Minister, who understand it has to fit within the context of a liberal economic order, a liberal international order, where there's basic rules of the road."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

His big takeaway: "It's not about principle; it's not about values — it's about power."

The first wave of change came at a unique historical moment. New political forces were emerging as the First World War came to a close, particularly in the Prairies, where populist movements included groups of farmers who were tired of partisan politics and yearned for a more decentralized and direct form of democracy. There was also a push to extend voting rights to women, the strengthening labour cause and the fragmentation of the two-party system — Grits versus Tories — that had endured since Confederation.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Onus on police to earn trust

Rosemary Westwood relocates from Canada to the U.S. She chronicles her observations in a weekly column for Metro.



ROSEMARY
WESTWOOD
From the U.S.

Something seemed to have snapped.

By the time Louisiana Sheriff Newell Normand got behind the podium this week to announce manslaughter charges in the high-profile shooting death of football player Joe McKnight (formerly NFL, recently CFL), it appeared as if years of Black Lives Matter activism, the ensuing scrutiny of police and attacks against police, and the swampy tone of internet debate had combined to tip him over the edge.

It began as a typical news conference announcing that Ronald Gasser, a white man, had been charged with manslaughter three days after police let him go — even though Gasser had admitted to shooting McKnight, a black man, to death, in a road rage incident just outside New Orleans. But

be more afraid of "black-on-black" crime, not road rage. He said Louisiana's "stand your ground" laws, which permit lethal self-defence, made the case tricky, and was incredulous that black-rights activists like the NAACP were not content to trust his officers to do their job in investigating McKnight's death.

"It's not even really anymore about this case. It's about all the other cases that are yet to come," Normand said, getting it only half right. Uproar over police actions across this country is also about all the cases that came before.

"This isn't about race. Not a single witness has said, up to this day, that there was one racial slur uttered during the course of these events," Normand said, ignoring completely the kind of ingrained racism that breeds disproportionate fear and hatred and requires

It began as a typical news conference ... but it quickly devolved into a polemic against internet trolling.

it quickly devolved into a polemic against internet trolling and criticisms of the force's investigation, existential dismay at the state of his community, and a plea to respect police and the justice process in Louisiana.

It was unusually instructive, too, on a far deeper level than who was charged with what, both for what Sheriff Normand said, and what he did not say. For a 44-minute microcosm of the colliding issues around race, the Internet and policing in this America, you couldn't do much better.

At times, Normand's fist pounded the podium, and he berated national and local critics of his investigation and of the elected officials who supported his police force. "Shame on you" he said. He quoted at length, and without censoring, the vulgar, racist and anti-gay comments directed at those officials (MSNBC had to drop its live coverage). He said black men should

no explicit slurs in order to raise the risk of violence.

"We better reflect and look at ourselves in the mirror and decide: What are we going to be about in our community? Are we going to continue to tear ourselves apart?" he asked, apparently unable to see that policing in Louisiana isn't exactly a model of community outreach.

This state has the highest incarceration rate in the U.S. New Orleans has a chronically underfunded public defender's office. Normand's own police force has been criticized for jailing school kids — and black kids in particular — at the highest rate in the state. And black people, and black men and boys in particular, are overrepresented across the criminal system. Normand might not like it, but optics matter. He might not like it, but onus isn't on the people to trust police, it's on police to earn that trust. And the critics aren't going anywhere.

WASHINGTON

Pizza-shop suspect says he had bad intel



Edgar Welch surrenders to police on Sunday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The man accused of firing an assault rifle inside a Washington restaurant said he regrets how he handled the situation but refused to completely dismiss the false online claims involving a child sex ring that brought him there.

"I just wanted to do some good and went about it the wrong way," Edgar Maddison Welch, who's been jailed since his Sunday arrest, told the New York Times in a Wednesday video conference.

Welch, 28, told the newspaper he started driving to Washington from his Salisbury, N.C., home intending only to give the Comet Ping Pong pizza restaurant a "closer look." But while on the way, he said he felt his "heart breaking over the thought of innocent people suffering."

Welch would not say why he brought an AR-15 into the pizza shop and fired it, the newspaper reported.

Asked what he thought when

he found there were no children in the restaurant, Welch said: "The intel on this wasn't 100 per cent." But he would not completely dismiss the online claims while talking to the newspaper, conceding only that there were no children "inside that dwelling."

Welch appears to have lived an aimless life that became turbulent in the weeks before he was drawn to the nation's capital by a fake news story.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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TRENDS

'Greenery' picked as colour of year

Amid social, political and environmental tumult around the world, the Pantone Color Institute on Thursday plucked fresh and zesty "greenery" as the colour of the year for 2017.

The vibrant green with yellow undertones is an answer, of sorts, to bruising 2016, signalling a yearning to rejuvenate, and to reconnect to both nature and something larger than oneself, said Laurie Pressman, the institute's vice-president.

The team at Pantone, based in Carlstadt, New Jersey, scouts trends through the year in media, on runways and at trade shows around the world.

The colour "greenery" is in contrast to the soft, calm-inducing dual choices of "rose quartz" and "serenity" blue as the colours of the year for 2016.

In addition to the emerging recycle-and-share economies, we have green rooftops, green spaces and indoor vertical farming. In home decor, there's a



trend to connect with the elements outside through open spaces and vast windows, Pressman said.

On the industrial side, both Skoda and Mercedes showed bright green cars for 2017. For the kitchen, Pantone spotted its shade in appliances, including a Keurig coffeemaker, and in cookware.

And in fashion, menswear designers have played into the idea of gender fluidity through prints and accessories of bright greens, along with the creators of womenswear and beauty products, ranging from the couture of Oscar de la Renta in a leaf-embellished gown to bright green shades for eyes, nails and lips.

Katy Perry, Kylie Jenner and Lena Dunham have all taken turns dying their hair bright green. Last year, a cologne from the Diana Vreeland brand came in green and was dubbed "Bold."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MINING

SNC-Lavalin eliminating 405 more jobs in Canada

Engineering giant SNC-Lavalin is cutting another 405 jobs in Canada, citing weakness in the mining sector and ongoing efforts to boost its profit margin. The company will eliminate 186 positions in Montreal, 195 in Ontario and 24 in Saskatoon, and will close its office in Sudbury, Ont.

This year, the company cut 950 jobs around the world, including 600 in Canada. That followed the elimination of 4,000 positions in 2014. Despite the series of job cuts, SNC-Lavalin's global workforce will be a little more than 39,000 at the end of the year, up 2,000 from a year ago due to hirings in other sectors. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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BANKING

Tech startups offer easier, cheaper ways to borrow, invest

It may not be much longer before bank branches join video-rental stores and record shops as relics of a bygone era.

Silicon Valley is pressuring banks to change their ways or risk becoming the latest industry overtaken by technology. Hundreds of financial technology, or "fintech," startups are offering easier and cheaper ways to save, borrow, spend and invest. They are doing it by shifting the battleground to smartphone apps and websites, which function as digital offices that are accessible around the clock with minimal staffing, and by lowering fees.

At this point, the fintech sector hasn't proven it can be a viable or trustworthy alternative to traditional banks and stock brokerages. Few of the startups have ever posted a profit, and one of the biggest, the Lending Club, is trying to recover from a breakdown that triggered the resignation of CEO Renaud Laplanche earlier this year.

Banks appear to be tackling the fintech threat by closing branches, laying off workers, pouring money into their own technology departments and even buying or teaming up with fintech startups.

TAKING THREAT SERIOUSLY
A survey of the financial services industry by the research firm Gartner Inc. found that 70 per cent of respondents considered fintech startups to be a bigger threat than their traditional rivals. With their guard up, the much bigger banks are more likely to drive many of the fintech startups



Vlad Tenev and Baiju Bhatt are co-founders of Robinhood, a stock brokerage that does not charge commissions for its customers to buy and sell shares. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

out of business if they don't acquire them first, says Gartner analyst Rajesh Kandaswamy.

BIG, BOLD APPROACH

Robinhood, a stock brokerage, does not charge any commissions for its more than 1 million customers to buy and sell shares. To make money, it recently introduced a \$10 monthly service that allows trading when the stock market is closed and offers higher borrowing limits.

At Affirm, an online lender, CEO Max Levchin — a co-founder of PayPal — has raised \$525 million to back Affirm's focus on consumers who do not like or cannot get credit cards. Affirm has developed its own formula to identify borrowers able to repay loans in equal installments in time frames ranging from three months to one year.

Affirm also refuses to charge fees for late payments, to further distinguish itself from banks and other credit card issuers. "I just don't think you

can run a business by screwing your customers these days," Levchin says. "I would like to think we are returning to what lenders are supposed to do."

CUSTOMERS NOT SOLD

Although many consumers rarely expect big banks to act in their best interests, they typically consider them to be a safer place to keep money because of their long histories in business. Like the big traditional banks, most digital-only banks also offer government-backed insurance on deposits, but that is not enough to overcome lingering doubts about their long-term prospects.

Lending Club, for instance, has been operating under a cloud since revealing that paperwork for \$3 million in loans had been falsified under Laplanche's leadership.

INVESTORS SKEPTICAL

Most fintechs are still financing venture capitalists and other financiers as they try to gain a foothold. Even some of

those investors believe fintechs may be underestimating the degree of difficulty facing them.

A YOUNG MARKET

Fintech's target market so far has been the millennial generation, the 18-to 34-year-olds who typically have a deeper attachment to their smartphones than any bank.

They are customers like Fred Miller, who opened his first account as a teenager a decade ago and quickly became disillusioned with the array of fees charged for everything from late payments to ATM withdrawals. After years of frustration, Miller defected to Simple, a digital bank that Australian immigrant Josh Reich started in 2010 after concluding that U.S. banks "went out of their way to screw customers out of their money."

Besides eschewing service fees, Simple also offers money management tools that help their customers set aside money.

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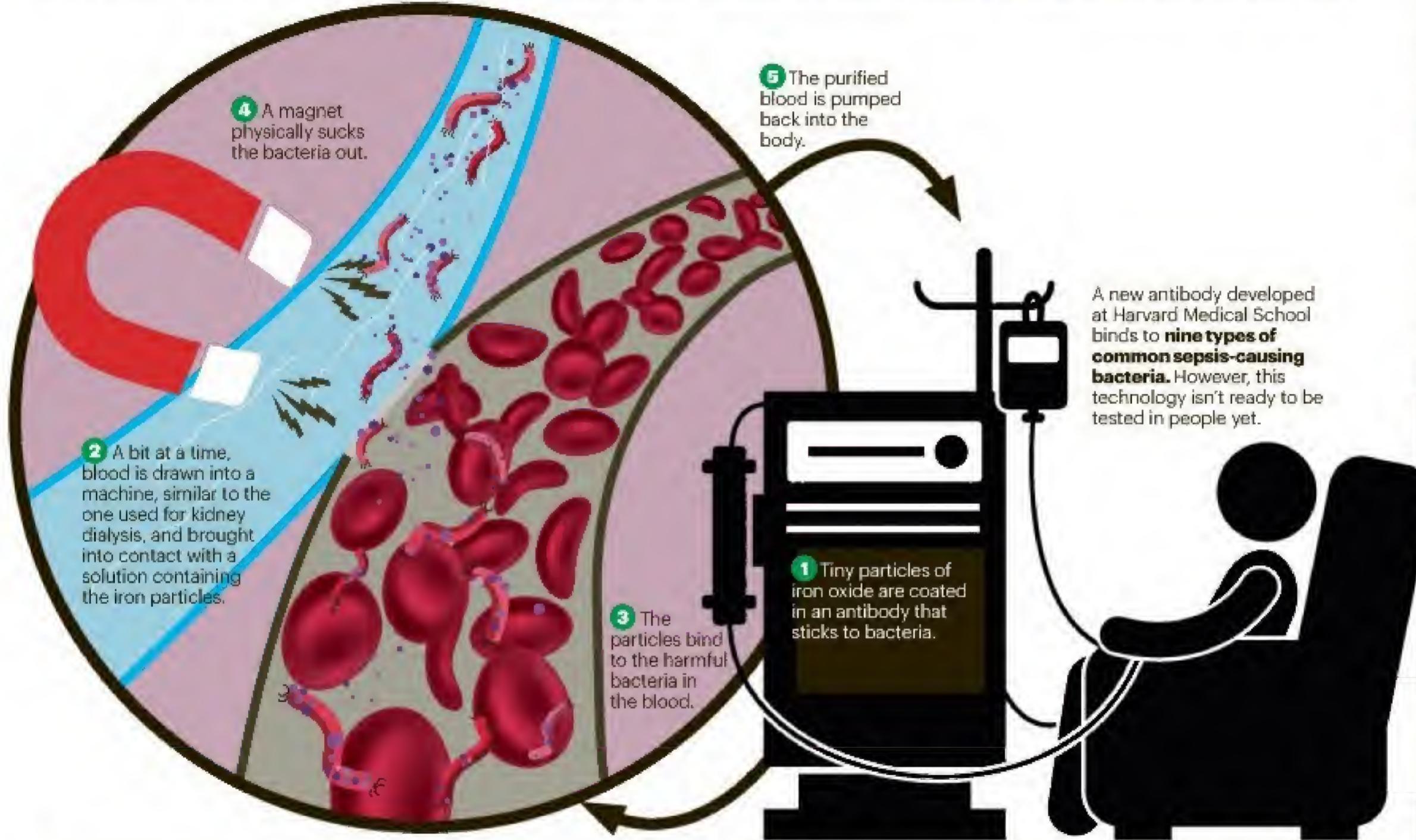
Your essential daily news

A study of a star like our sun suggests life on Earth will disappear when our sun explodes in 5 billion years, but the planet itself might survive

DECODED by Genna Buck and Andrés Plana

AN ATTRACTIVE FUTURE TREATMENT

Emergency rooms see it every day: Someone with a very high or very low temperature and confusion. They're gasping for breath and going downhill fast. It's **sepsis**, when the immune system launches an all-out attack on an infection, but also damages healthy organs, leading to death in a third of patients. There's often no time to determine exactly which germ is responsible. Treatment is a truckload of antibiotics, life support and lot of hope. **Thanks to nanotechnology, there could soon be a better way.**



CITIZEN SCIENTIST by Genna Buck

Why pseudoscience thrives on uncertainty

What are muscle knots? I have a nasty one in my neck. Depending on what you Google, they range from being filled with toxins to being fabrications of massage therapists' imagination. - Heather

Oh man, Heather. That was quite a Google pit you fell into. And now I'm down here with you. So let's find our way out!

First of all, though common, muscle knots are poorly understood. It's not even certain that they're one discrete thing, with a specific cause and progression.

Instead, they're defined by a set of symptoms. A knot is a tender area that may feel like a knob of hard tissue deep within a muscle. Putting pressure on it usually causes painful twitching and additional pain in a distant muscle. (Press the knot in your calf, and your foot seizes up.)

One major theory says muscle knots are **myofascial trigger points**: bits of hypersensitive connective tissue that cause muscle to tense up painfully. A few imaging studies have found increased stiffness in areas where

patients say they have knots.

But recent research suggests the trigger point theory doesn't hold up. The diagnostic criteria are vague and variable. Plus, none of the treatments based on it seem to work better than a placebo: not the usual stuff, like injecting Botox or anaesthetic into the sore spot, and not unproven, New-Agey therapies like acupuncture or dry needling, either.

Some knots could be due to scar tissue from a tear or strain. Nerve swelling may be to blame. But there are no clear answers.

And when there's no clear cause or reliable treatment for a painful condition that affects many people, quacks and charlatans get visions of dollar signs dancing in their heads. Just look at the cottage industry of expensive supplements and dubious diets for irritable bowel syndrome.

The cure for this phenomenon is more research. I can personally assure you muscle knots are real. I just can't tell you what they are.

Science Question?
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FINDINGS
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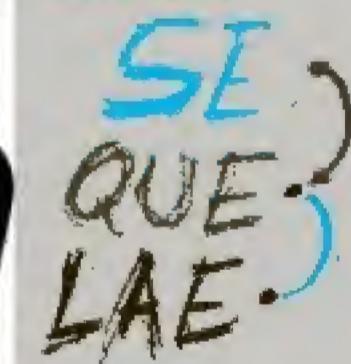
PRECOCIOUS POLLUTERS

Carbon dating of 7,000-year-old silt from the Jordan River has shown that Neolithic humans were polluting the water with copper back when they first learned to smelt.

D-N-Awful

Swedish scientists have discovered that a single gene mutation, which causes us to make more omega-3 and 6 fats, is linked to metabolic disease, rheumatism, bowel disease and several cancers. Before we started eating so many calories and so much fat, this may have been helpful.

SOUND SMART



DEFINITION

Sequelae (singular: **sequela**) is the medical term for a condition or disease that happens as a consequence of a past one.

USE IT IN A SENTENCE

Deborah's smoking habit, even though she only smokes an average of one cigarette a day, puts her at a nine times greater risk of dying from lung cancer than a non-smoker. Lung cancer is a known **sequelae** of nicotine addiction.

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2011 FORD EDGE AWD #PA815A
\$15,995 \$140BW



2014 MINI COOPER CLUBMAN
(HYDE PARK EDITION) #16GW4081A
\$19,995 \$153BW



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\$12,995 \$97BW



2013 VOLVO XC60 T6 AWD #PB6033A
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Jessica Chastain ushers us behind the curtain of the most unscrupulous show in the United States — the lobbying industry — in *Miss Sloane*. CONTRIBUTED

Washington is as dirty as ever

POLITICAL THRILLER

Miss Sloane is a look at the legal political graft system



This weekend Jessica Chastain stars in the political thriller *Miss Sloane*. The title refers to the lobbyist main character but the film could easily have been titled *Drain the Swamp*.

Made before Donald Trump became president-elect, it only takes about 20 seconds before the word "trump" crops up in the dialogue. He's never men-

tioned by name, but this look at "the most morally bankrupt profession since faith healing" paints exactly the ugly picture of behind-the-scenes machinations that Trump railed against on the campaign trail.

Chastain is Elizabeth Sloane, a sleep-deprived D.C. lobbyist "at the forefront of a business with a terrible reputation." She'll represent anyone, it seems, except the gun lobby, who offer her a lucrative contract, only to be laughed at and rejected.

Soon after she leaves her firm — one of the biggest in the country — to join a small, scrappy group who aim to whip up support for a bill that will demand background checks for all gun owners.

It's a new hot-button peek behind the curtain of a politi-

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Office Christmas Party	★★
Jackie	★★★
Lion	★★★★
Miss Sloane	★★★★
Manchester by the Sea	★★★★

HOW RATING WORKS	
★★★	SEE IT
★★★★	WORTHWHILE
★★	UP TO YOU
★	SKIP IT

cal process, but Hollywood has been making *Drain the Swamp* movies for years.

The explosive *Advise and Consent* is based on former New York Times congressional correspondent Allen Drury's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel about the ratification of a secretary of state and the dirty little secrets people in public life must keep hidden. Political battle lines are drawn as a full frontal attack is launched on the character and credentials

of the new nominee.

Director Otto Preminger almost pulled off one of the great casting coups of the 1960s when he offered civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. a role in *Advise and Consent*. The mercurial director thought King would be perfect for the role of a southern senator, despite the fact that no African Americans were serving in Senate at the time. King gave the offer some thought, but declined fearing the backlash

and possible harm to the civil rights movement.

More recently, in *The Ides of March* George Clooney (who also directed) played a Democratic Party candidate; the kind of guy who would make the top of Bill O'Reilly's head pop off. He's pro-ecology, anti-oil. He wants to tax the rich and legalize gay marriage. If he leans any further left he'll topple over.

Although Clooney has spoken out about many of these topics in real life, he didn't make a left-wing film. Instead he made a warts-and-all political movie about dirty dealings on the campaign trail.

The first hour is good stuff, great acting from Ryan Gosling, Paul Giamatti and Philip Seymour Hoffman and a fascinating, if occasionally dry

look at life in the political fast lane. Then comes the blackmail, the meetings in darkened stairwells and double-crossing journalists.

Finally *The Campaign*, a comedy starring Will Ferrell and Zach Galifianakis as incumbent congressmen, begins with a quote from former presidential hopeful Ross Perot: "War has rules. Mud wrestling has rules. Politics has no rules."

Neither does the movie; no rules or boundaries. These candidates go beyond the usual name-calling — "He looks like Osama Bin Laden" — to dirty tricks that would make Tricky Dick blush. It's a through-the-looking glass-vision of how politics works that features ambition, greed, corruption and even a candidate who punches a baby.

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Cost of being a woman in politics

THRILLER

Miss Sloane finds strong woman caught up in danger

Steve Gow

For Metro Canada

John Madden isn't afraid to admit it: He really admires women.

And it shows in the veteran filmmaker's oeuvre. From the Oscar-nominated Queen Victoria biopic *Mrs. Brown* to the Oscar-winning hit *Shakespeare in Love*, he has crafted a career by considering the complexity of women.

"Almost every film I make ends up being about an empowered woman in a different way," stated Madden recently while promoting his latest thriller *Miss Sloane*.

"I mean, they are a superior race in my view. Precisely because the balance of emotion, intellect and drive is a balance that all men ought to aspire to and most can't or don't."

Certainly Madden's latest character, the titular *Miss Sloane*, comprises those commendable qualities, even if they are tested.

When the story's cutthroat lobbyist faces off against Washington's most ferocious power-brokers to take up arms against the gun lobby, she must pay the cost of being a woman of high authority in the political world.

"This piece is not trying to put forward feminist ideas, but nevertheless it's absolutely about female empowerment and all of the key characters moving forward are women," said Madden of the labyrinthine drama.

"The idea that she weaponizes herself and purges herself

MOVIES

Art imitates life, and the presidential campaign

Filmed amidst the heated U.S. election, *Miss Sloane* took on new context in light of the gender politics that arose during the campaign.

"The film works in that way and I think that's a potentially very satisfying experience," said Madden.

"Gender politics and the political process itself became the obliterating issues of the presidential race, both of which are installed right at the centre of our film."

Toronto, D.C.?

Although set in Washington, *Miss Sloane* was filmed in Toronto. Keen eyes will surely recognize many familiar locations.

"Oh dammit, you weren't taken in!" laughed Madden.



who admits to filming in such venues as the Royal York Hotel.

"It's the most extraordinary thing we did."

"We shot the majority of the film in about four blocks of the core really."

of everything that makes her an incredibly effective political performer, and in the process connects with something she actually believes in, was quite an interesting story."

The thriller's empowerment theme wouldn't succeed without star Jessica Chastain either, who not only delivers a "virtuoso performance," but embraced the chance to tackle issues that are essential to her art.

"It has nothing to do with observable technique," said Madden of Chastain's incredible skill for such an intricate, tangled character.

"She has a way of actually deploying her intelligence and emotional intelligence in a way that simply emerges as behaviour."

She seeks out roles that are very much defined by gender issues because she's very engaged in that world.

John Madden on Jessica Chastain



Jessica Chastain embraced her role in *Miss Sloane* because the issues of gender politics are very much a part of her experience as an actress. CONTRIBUTED



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Hilarious distraction from the mundane

INTERVIEW

A message to North America to take a break these holidays

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

In *Office Christmas Party* T.J. Miller plays Clay, a scattered office manager with a "mind like a drunk baby." In a last ditch effort to save his branch from closure he tries to woo a lucrative client by throwing a no-holds-barred Christmas party.

"This is the way we close Walter," says Clay. "We throw the best Christmas party he's ever seen. We could save everybody's jobs."

Miller leads an ensemble cast featuring heavy-hitters like Jason Bateman, Olivia Munn, Kate McKinnon and Jennifer Aniston but he doesn't want to talk about that. Not right away, anyway.

Instead he begins the interview with, "Let's talk comedy in a time of tragedy."

OK, lets.

"Basically I have a political obstacle to my social mission statement," he says.

"The social statement was, tragedy permeates our everyday lives, people are lonely, they're scared, they have death anxiety, they don't know how to attribute meaning to their own existence, so through comedy we can provide an opiate or distraction that permeates our everyday lives. Through satire we can hopefully frame the world in a way that people can laugh at.



From left: Courtney B. Vance and T.J. Miller in *Office Christmas Party*. Miller plays Clay, an office manager who, in a last ditch effort to save his branch from closure, throws an epic office party in an attempt to woo a potential client. CONTRIBUTED

"Also I aim to help people, through my stand up, to release the death anxiety. I aim to help people not take themselves so seriously."

When Miller, who also currently plays Erlich Bachman on *Silicon Valley*, finally gets around to talking about *Office Christmas Party*, he's still on

message.

"It's very easy to promote a comedy during the apocalypse," he says.

The Christmas film, which features a greedy pimp, a sexually repressed head of HR and an office load of drunk, disgruntled employees, is a mix and match of sentimen-

tality and debauchery that Miller thinks is perfect for the season.

"What better way to spend the holidays?" he asks. "First of all you don't have to talk to your family for an hour-and-a-half during the holidays. That's a bonus. If the movie is funny, you talk about how

funny it was for half-an-hour. How dynamic Jenifer Aniston, Jason Bateman and Courtney B. Vance are. How strange I look in a Santa suit for that long. That my facial hair is still abrasive and arresting. That's two-and-a-half to three hours towards a stress free holiday. That's what we're

pitching you.

"It's a funny movie. It's a laugh a minute. Well, it's a laugh every minute-and-a-half to two minutes. We wanted to give you a break. It's exhausting to laugh every minute."

Miller, who once worked as a legal secretary in the same Chicago office building seen in the film, says the movie is silly and fun but shares his core comedy philosophy.

"Workplace environments have become so sterile and corporations have become so much about profit and not the people they work with that we've lost the fun of work. We don't have cool office Christmas parties anymore. We are saying, 'You spend so much time with the people you work with, why not have a night or two a year where you can kind of just relax? Take a night off from worrying about offending someone or giving 'tude.'

"That is our message to North America. Take the holidays, drink way too much eggnog, laugh, relax and know that we've got a lot of work to do in 2017."

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THE GREAT WALL

Damon fights whitewashing allegations



Matt Damon. GETTY IMAGES

Matt Damon criticized "outrageous" stories in the era of fake news as he responded Tuesday to accusations that his role in the new China-Hollywood co-production *The Great Wall* should have gone to an Asian actor.

Some critics have said Damon's casting as the lead character amounted to "whitewashing," in which Caucasians are chosen for roles that actors of other ethnicities should play.

In an interview with The Associated Press, the American actor said he thinks of the term "whitewashing" as applying to Caucasian actors putting on makeup to appear to be of another race, as was common in the early days of film and television, when racism was overt.

"That whole idea of whitewashing, I take that very seriously," Damon said, using the example of the Irish-American actor Chuck Connors, who played the lead character in the 1962 film *Geronimo*, about the famed Apache chief.

Damon, 46, plays an English mercenary in the upcoming \$150 million adventure fantasy about a Chinese army battling monsters, helmed by acclaimed Chinese director Zhang Yimou.

The movie's trailer sparked criticism in the U.S. that a white man had been chosen to play the lead in a film set in China meant to showcase Chinese culture. The furor came amid other accusations of a lack of diversity and opportunities for Asian actors

in Hollywood.

Damon questioned whether the critical stories on online news sites based on a 30-second teaser trailer would have existed before the era of fake news and headlines designed to make people click on them.

"It suddenly becomes a story because people click on it, versus the traditional ways that a story would get vetted before it would get to that point," said the star of the Bourne franchise.

People fall for outrageous headlines, but "eventually you stop clicking on some of those more outrageous things because you just realize there is nothing to the story when you get to it," Damon said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



While on the awards trail, Patel said he's taking the opportunity to talk to and learn from his fellow actors on the same path. "The first time around (for Slumdog Millionaire), I was so beautifully naive about it," he laughed. **CONTRIBUTED**

Dev in the details

ACTING

Slumdog idol throws himself into role fully

Dev Patel knows how special a film like Lion is.

He's been waiting nearly eight years, since his breakout in Slumdog Millionaire, for a role as substantive and soulful as Saroo Brierley, an Indian man who was lost as a five-year-old, adopted and raised by Australian parents, and who, 25 years later, used Google Earth to retrace his steps to his hometown and his birthmother, not knowing the name of either.

"I read an article about it somewhere, I'm not quite sure where, and I was completely mesmerized," Patel said.

It's why the 26-year-old pursued the part so aggressively, showing up at screenwriter Luke Davies's doorstep before the script was even finished, and, after winning the part, taking a full eight months to prepare.

Not only did the rail-thin Patel bulk up to play the sporty Saroo, grow his hair out, and learn a difficult Australian accent, but he also fully immersed himself into the emotional and spiritual reality of the man.

Brierley and Patel had to go much deeper than that, though.

This is not a simple boy-goes-home story. Brierley's traumatic separation from his home and his mother and struggle to survive on his own is contrasted by his then-comfortable upbringing in Australia with supportive and loving adoptive parents.

His past is something that

he represses for years, until it becomes a ghost so undeniable that he must do everything he can to find his mother.

It's one of those stranger-than-fiction stories that begs for cinematic treatment.

"I can't say that the majority or even half the movie is sensationalized. It really isn't. It actually happened in real life," Brierley said.

On set, director Garth Davis pushed Patel deeper into Brierley's pain.

He had Patel watch the actor playing the five-year-old Brierley (newcomer Sunny Pawar) so that there were specific memories to draw on.

He threw him into big scenes right off the bat (they shot the very last scene first), and he made him do "hippie" mental exercises like staring into a mirror for a half hour before coming to set one day.

"The first two minutes were excruciating, because when you do that, you're usually brushing your teeth or popping a pimple or something and then the next 20 minutes all of a sudden I got sucked into this sort of trance-like state and I couldn't recognize the person staring back at me," Patel said.

"I looked like my father. I looked like my mother. And I went to set visibly shaken. I



I really relate to characters kind of going against the odds.

Dev Patel

was like 'Garth, I feel like a fool, like I don't know who I am. I think that the task went horribly wrong.' He looked at me and said, 'that's exactly what you should feel. Your body is just a shell but your soul is ever-changing. I was like 'whoa.'

It was all in service of capturing the essence of Brierley, who Patel knows he doesn't look like.

For Patel, the stories represent completely different journeys — Brierley is a modern Australian man who remembers little of his Indian identity.

Patel is already fully on the awards trail for Lion. He's done this before, but now has a bit of experience under his belt and is no longer that wide-eyed 18-year-old.

He said he's taking advantage of the opportunity to talk to and learn from his fellow actors on the same path.

"The first time around I was so beautifully naive about it. I look at Sunny and I can relate to it. He met Bill Clinton the other day and I don't quite think it dawned on him who the man was he was meeting," Patel said, laughing.

Ultimately, Patel is just grateful that he was able to stretch beyond "your usual quirky best friend character role or like tech extraordinaire."

"Stories like this, they're so few and far between especially for a British Indian guy like myself," he said. "I think everyone faces a stereotype ... I don't want to make it about that. It's just my thought process of throwing absolutely everything at this role. I knew how precious it was."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BIOPICTURE

Film spotlights children's plight

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada

After nearly 35 years in movies, Nicole Kidman can handpick any director to work with in Hollywood. Instead, the 49-year-old starlet's latest project was helmed by first-timer Garth Davis — an artist more famous for making Coke commercials than feature films.

"He's a really talented director," said Kidman during an interview for Lion. "Garth is just very easy; he's got a very soulful, laid-back approach to things and so I was just very happy to be a part of his vision."

Inasmuch as the Toronto International Film Festival's People's Choice runner-up was envisaged by Davis, Lion is truly the celluloid realization of the life of Saroo Brierley — a young Indian man who, at five years old, was tragically separated from his family and finds himself living on Calcutta streets.

Unable to speak the local tongue and sleeping in train stations, Saroo's epic odyssey ends up miles away in Australia where he eventually finds salvation in an adoptive mother named Sue Brierley.



Nicole Kidman (Sue Brierley), David Wenham (John Brierley), and Sunny Pawar (young Saroo Brierley), star in Lion. MARK ROGERS/SUPPLIED

"It was definitely how Saroo remembered that experience," explained Davis of the heart-wrenching memoir. "I'm just presenting the story as I understand it so I think some people won't even accept it because it's just too crazy to believe."

But the film is also a profound eye-opener to the plight of thousands of kids around the globe. As much as Davis aimed to unweave an inspirational family drama, he was soon making a movie with a message.

"It's just one of those disturbing truths that there are kids sleeping at the train station even today," said Davis. "We

didn't realize just how many kids go missing — it's a big issue (and) if anything can bring some dialogue and awareness about it, that's great."

As for Kidman, she was simply overjoyed with finding a connection to Brierley and the chance to express her own devotion as mother to two adopted children.

"Just like her speech (in the film) when she said she had this vision of a brown-skinned child and then it all came to fruition — I just related," admitted Kidman, with a laugh. "But she also has red hair, fair skin and she's Australian — so we have a few things in common."

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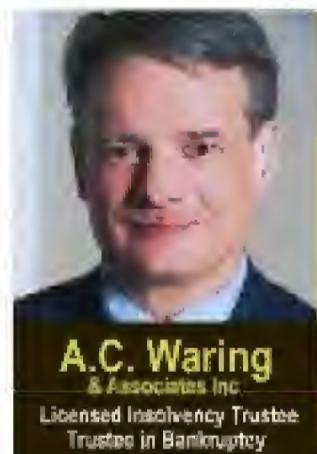
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Capturing the essence of Jackie Kennedy



Natalie Portman has gained the attention of critics for her portrayal of the iconic wife of President John F. Kennedy in Jackie.

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ICON

Portman astounding in role as former First Lady

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada



Natalie Portman is certainly a favourite for an Oscar nomination with her latest performance — as Jackie Kennedy.

After all, the 35-year-old thespian has been winning accolades from the toughest critics for her astounding portrayal of the endearing former First Lady in the eponymous new biopic, Jackie.

"It was the first time that I'd played a character that people know so well; they know exactly what she sounded like and how she moved," recalled Portman during a recent interview about the scrutiny of interpreting the iconic wife of President John F. Kennedy. "You could literally put the images side by side and play them at the same time and see how close I am — you can judge it that closely."

It's no surprise that the role has been viewed under a microscope either. For more than 50 years, the late-icon has been one of America's most admired women. But even as ubiquitous and well-known as Jackie may be, Portman admits her education was comprised of "a pretty superficial perception" until she began researching some 20 books in preparation.

"The fact that she coined Camelot was a surprise to me," said Portman of the favourable nickname graced upon the Kennedy presidency. "I always thought that was the press that had come up with that, but I hadn't realized she had named it herself."

Directed by acclaimed foreign director Pablo Larrain (No, Neruda), Jackie is much more than just focused on the superficialities of Jackie's quips or legacy as a fashion icon, however.

Instead, the Chilean auteur aimed to craft a distinctive character study of a conflicted First Lady in the wake of her husband's 1963 assassination — a national tragedy and a

66

It was the first time that I'd played a character that people know so well.

Natalie Portman

mourning she shared with the public. It was this challenge that Portman found "definitely daunting but also nice to do something that you're totally scared of."

"Pablo is an incredible talent and I think he made something really special and unique," added Portman, who truly appreciates the skills of an adept director. "I feel like a lot of directors have their way of what they think they should be saying to actors and it really doesn't work the same for everyone. It's a very specific talent to be able to understand and intuit what an actor needs."

MOVIES

Glimpse into private life

The film explores the nuances of Jackie Kennedy's public and private sides in the immediate aftermath of the assassination of her husband as she plans the funeral, comforts her children and tends to her husband's legacy.

It's what compelled screenwriter Noah Oppenheim to make her the subject of his first script.

"I didn't feel like she had ever gotten enough credit for understanding intuitively the power of television, the power of imagery and iconography and her role in defining how we remember her husband's presidency," he said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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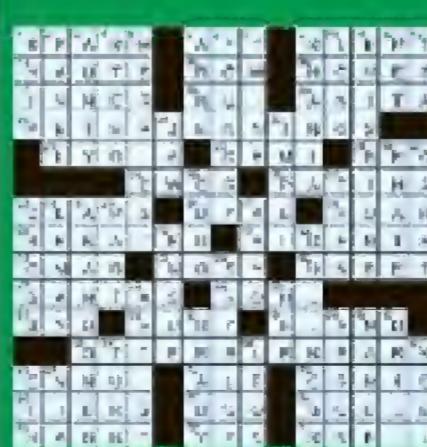
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Casey Affleck, above with Kyle Chandler, is at the core of *Manchester By The Sea*. CLAIRE FOLGER/ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS/AP

Affleck had no time for chit-chat in moody role

INTERVIEW

Tour de force in Manchester by the Sea affirms actor's talents

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

As a man thrown into the depths of despair in *Manchester by the Sea*, Casey Affleck had to mine some deep emotional territory. He describes the process of playing a person who confronts his tragic past to working out at the gym.

"This is a bad analogy," he laughs. "You warm up into it before you do your heavy lifting."

Affleck is the core of the film. He's in virtually every frame and while understated, he bristles with feeling. It is a tremendous performance that never falls into morbidity as he skilfully keeps the character alive, both physically and

metaphysically.

Every day is a struggle for him and he deals with his trauma the only way he knows how, with blistering honesty and by drinking and fighting to feel something. There is emotional truth in every mumbled line, and letting that go at the end of the day was difficult.

"That is the experience I think most actors would describe having," he says. "I don't think it's unique or particularly committed or brave of me. It's what you have to do."

"You have to go there, show up on set and be prepared to play the scene with the right feelings, the way it is supposed to be. I'm just not good enough to show up in a great mood, say good morning to everybody, check in with the kids and read

the paper and then walk into the scene and be believably gutted in the way he is supposed to be."

"He carries around all this guilt, he's devastated and filled with self loathing so I have to start way back in preproduction and try to slip into these bad feelings and stay there for as long as I can."

"If you just showed up and tried to walk through it or do anything but give 100 percent, you'd really look like a jackass. I didn't want to do that no matter what."

"It was a hard movie to make but that is what I like about making movies. If you are just showing up and chit-chatting and having fun, that is not what is satisfying about making movies. It feels really good to be

It was a hard movie to make but that is what I like about making movies. If you are just showing up and chit-chatting...that is not what is satisfying. Casey Affleck

somebody else and live in some character's life, even if their life is tragic. Then you come out of it."

Manchester by the Sea isn't just an exercise in Sturm und Drang. It deals with very real, very difficult human situations but does so with honesty and a great deal of unexpected humour and wisdom so not every day on set was filled with angst.

"Some of the what you think would be harder scenes to do, we just started and finished. Did them really quickly," Affleck says.

Others, like those with Michelle Williams who plays his separated wife in the film, he says took longer.

"I would say the longest scene was when I come home to find her in the bedroom. It was one of the lightest, most pleasant scenes to do. Take my clothes off and straddle Michelle (Williams). 'One more please! Can we try something different here?' That scene took a long time."

MEDIA

Ex-cons to get jobs at Vice

Vice Media is starting an apprenticeship program at its Brooklyn headquarters for recently released prison inmates, saying it wants to take action on an issue that the media company has been reporting on for the past few years.

Starting early next year, Vice will hire five former inmates for production, editorial and marketing jobs, the company said Thursday. If it works well, Vice will look to expand and encourage other companies to start their own programs.

Vice, the thriving youth-oriented company with magazines, cable and digital channels and news shows that air on HBO, has focused on prison reform since its documentary *Fixing the System* was shown on HBO in 2015.

Vice CEO Shane Smith said that while the apprentice program is a small step toward tackling the high recidivism rate among former inmates, he wanted to "alleviate some of these issues by putting our money where our mouth is."

The company is working with the New York-based Center for Employment Opportunities, which is employing more than 7,000 former inmates in temporary jobs with the hope they develop skills and a work history that would lead to more



Vice CEO Shane Smith says that because his media company has been advocating prison reforms, it will hire released inmates to help them learn valuable on-the-job skills.

NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

permanent employment. The centre helps employ people in New York, California, Pennsylvania and Oklahoma.

Everyone at Vice who has reported on prison issues was struck by the difficulties faced by people once they get out, said Alyssa Mastromonaco, the company's COO, who formerly worked in the Obama White House.

Studies have outlined the difficulty former inmates have in landing jobs once they get out, and how hard it is for them to keep away from crime when they can't.

"It's not just activism, rallying for a cause," she said. "This is meaningful institutional change if you can do it."

Those accepted into the program get six-month jobs, working 40 hours per week for \$15 an hour. People aged 18 to 25 living in New York City and on probation or parole are eligible.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo applauded Vice's announcement.

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Joseph Shabason, Carmen Elle and Kieran Adams make up the core of DIANA. CONTRIBUTED

Sometimes accidents yield brilliance, such as DIANA

ON TOUR

Carmen Elle returns for new synth-pop album

Ben Rayner

Torstar News Services

Carmen Elle hadn't a clue she was signing up to front a "real" band when she agreed to sing on some early tracks for the casual studio project that would become DIANA four years ago, so it's fully appropriate she didn't realize she was embroiled in recording the Canadian synth-pop outfit's second album until the process was well underway.

Co-founders Kieran Adams and Joseph Shabason simply started slipping "these innocent little emails" into her inbox seeking feedback and potential vocal melodies for nascent song ideas until — hold up — she'd been duped into making another DIANA record.

"Just because of the nature of the way Joseph and Kieran and I communicated in the past — I don't think we do it anymore, but we definitely did in the past — there was almost a lack of communication about it," says Elle. "I'm just thinking personally about it, but I didn't really know that we were recording an album probably until we were pretty deep into it."

No, no, DIANA isn't some sort of run-of-the-mill musical con job.

Those extra musicians don't feel like they're superfluous. Everyone feels really crucial to the setup. Carmen Elle

Elle is there willingly, although her initial commitment to the group was almost accidental, prompted by the enthusiastic early response to a couple of commanding smooth singles featuring her coolly expressive coo, *Born Again* and *Perpetual Surrender*, posted to SoundCloud in late 2012.

Adams and Shabason, two in-demand session players who'd

originally just been looking for a fun excuse to work together as friends, didn't know she was the vocalist they'd been looking for until they brought her in. Nor did any of the three expect the album borne of their collaboration mere months later, 2013's *Perpetual Surrender*, to garner so much immediate attention that they'd actually be asked to take it on the road.

They mustered a suitable stage show at the time despite

Elle's admitted "anxiety" in the face of touring with the fleeting addition of Paul Mathew on bass. But this time DIANA is doing it up proper from the get-go to match the more expansive ambitions of *Perpetual Surrender*'s just-released followup, *Familiar Touch*: a sumptuous, slow-to-take exercise in midtempo electro-balladry informed in equal parts by '80s classy downtempo, '90s

post-rave chill-out, and Adams' and Shabason's shared background in jazz.

They're taking it to the people as a seven-piece also featuring Thom Gill on guitars and keys, Bram Gielen on bass, and Ivy Mairi and one-time Canadian Idol runner-up Gary Beals on backup vocals.

"Those extra musicians don't feel like they're superfluous. Everyone feels really crucial to the setup," says Elle.

"I don't know if that's just the nature of the songs that we've written and they're just f—ing epicly huge arrangements that require that many bodies onstage or what. Kieran was always, like, 'The album is the album and the live show is the live show' because I would say, 'Why do we have six vocal parts on this song? We're never going to do this live!'

"But talking about another record after this, Kieran has been really, really excited at the notion of doing it even more live than this one. So I think that's the direction we would like to move in, ideally."

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Can't take the country out of singer Beyoncé

DADDY LESSONS

Although a Grammy committee is certainly trying

Beyoncé earned a whopping nine Grammy nominations Tuesday, including best rock performance, but the singer's twangy song *Daddy Lessons* was rejected by the Recording Academy's country music committee.

A person familiar with the Grammy nomination process told The Associated Press on Wednesday that Beyoncé submitted *Daddy Lessons* — from her album *Lemonade* — to the country category. The person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the person was not allowed to speak publicly about the topic, said the country music committee rejected the song.

If Beyoncé's song had made it through, it would have been eligible for honours such as best country song and country solo performance.

Representatives for Beyoncé and the Grammys didn't immediately reply to emails seeking comment.

Daddy Lessons highlights the Houston native's Southern music roots, incorporating horns, acoustic guitar and hand claps as Beyoncé sings about lessons she learned from her father and former manager. The lyrics include references to the Second Amendment, the Bible and

shooting guns.

Beyoncé performed the track at last month's Country Music Association Awards alongside the Dixie Chicks, and later released a version of the song featuring the country trio.

Earlier in the year, the Chicks covered the song on their tour, and others in the country genre welcomed the tune, including Blake Shelton, who defended the song from critics who say it's not country.

Country star Dierks Bentley told the AP, "There is just something intangible about it that it feels like a country song."

Karen Fairchild of Little Big Town said, "(Beyoncé) has some stories to tell — that's clear on *Lemonade*. And that's what makes country music great."

Beyoncé, still, impressed the music world by earning Grammy nominations in the rock, pop, R&B and rap categories — becoming the first artist to earn nominations in those fields in the same year.

Beyoncé's nine nominations include the big three: album of the year for *Lemonade* and song, and record of the year for *Formation*. She is also competing for best rock performance (*Don't Hurt Yourself* with Jack White), pop solo performance (*Hold Up*), rap/sung performance (*Freedom* with Kendrick Lamar) and urban contemporary album (*Lemonade*).

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Beyoncé in the video for *Daddy Lessons*. LEMONADE/DIGITAL BOOKLET/SCREENSHOT

DOLLY PARTON

Musical telethon for wildfire victims

Country icon Dolly Parton has organized a musical telethon to raise money for victims of the Tennessee wildfires that destroyed more than 1,700 homes in the resort town of Gatlinburg.

The event, which will air Dec. 13 on Great American Country, will include performances by Reba McEntire, Kenny Rogers, Alison Krauss and Parton, whose Dollywood theme park in neighbouring Pigeon Forge escaped damage from the fires.

Proceeds from the telethon will go to the Dollywood Foundation My People Fund,

which was created to provide \$1,000 each month to Sevier County families whose homes were damaged or destroyed by the wildfires.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FIRE FACTS

Officials say 14 people have died and more than 135 were injured in the fire that spread from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Tennessee.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MUSIC BRIEFS

Mick Jagger celebrates birth of 8th child

Mick Jagger's representatives say the rock legend has welcomed his eighth child.

Jagger, the 73-year-old front-man of the Rolling Stones, was on hand Thursday at a New York hospital when girlfriend, Melanie Hamrick, gave birth to the couple's son. According to a statement, both parents are "delighted" and "mother and baby are doing well."

Jagger already has seven children — Georgia,

James, Jade, Elizabeth, Lucas, Karis and Gabriel — who range in age from their 40s to teenagers.

He became a great-grandfather in May 2014 when Jade's daughter, Assisi, gave birth to a baby girl.

Hamrick is a 29-year-old ballerina who has performed with the American Ballet Theatre in New York. They began dating in 2014.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SO VERY '70S

Sensitive, culturally relevant topics have always had a tough time crossing over to the mainstream. In the 1960s and '70s, filmmakers driven by social change found new and inventive ways to open the conversation on a wide range of difficult-to-tackle subjects and made great films in the process. Here are five tough topics tackled by some iconic films:



CONTRIBUTED BY HOLLYWOOD SUITE

Midlife Crisis: A concept that surprisingly only became prominent in the mid-'60s, the cultural discussion about the concept of a midlife crisis took off after Blake Edward's hilarious 1979 comedy *10*, which follows a hapless Dudley Moore going to ridiculous lengths to solve his.

The Vietnam War: Before 1978's *Coming Home* and especially 1979's *Apocalypse Now*, most films portrayed the Vietnam War in a positive light. Once these films were released, though, it was harder for the public at large to ignore how different Vietnam had been, the horrors individuals had survived in the conflict and the veterans who were slipping through the cracks.

Open Relationships: Though the summer of '69 was all about free love for hippies, *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice* explored the practice of New Age thinking among more "square" couples. Despite the film's hesitance to praise these practices, it went on to open the conversation about New Age therapies and alternative relationships in popular culture.

Going "Out West": Work was hard to find in the Maritimes in the '60s and '70s, and many folks headed west only to find more unemployment, but without the comforts of home. Donald Shebib's *Goin' Down The Road* follows the journey of two men on just such a hopeless quest, and connected audiences across Canada to the struggles of their fellow countrymen.

Home Computers: The late '70s brought computers into homes for the first time, but many families were unsettled by what the true costs of this kind of technology might be. It's no wonder 1977's *Demon Seed* sees the introduction of computing and automation as something that destroys the sanctity of the traditional home in terrifying ways.

Rediscover the films that reflected changing times. The Hollywood Suite Free Preview is on now until Jan. 5. Enjoy the best movies of the '70s, '80s, '90s and 2000s uncut and commercial-free on four HDTV channels and On Demand, available on most TV providers.

Catch *Apocalypse Now*, *Goin' Down the Road*, *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice*, *Demon Seed* and *10* this month on the Hollywood Suite '70s Movies channel. Learn more at hollywoodsuite.ca/freepreview.

HOLLYWOOD SUITE





San Fran is a food paradise

GASTRONOMY

Kitchens kick quality up several tasty notches

Renée S. Suen
For Torstar News Service

"Restaurants should be about how you can provide greater pleasure to people," says Joshua Skenes when asked about the uninhibitedly luxurious 18-course Discovery menu at his three Michelin-starred restaurant, Saison.

A master of live-fire and smoke, Skenes' cooking is refined, yet restrained. Pristine ingredients are showcased with minimum intervention, like the opening volley of complimentary Krug, buttery-rich, wood-fire baked biscuit (using flour milled on premise) with a mountain of reserve caviar cured in house-smoked salt. The experience is exquisite, rising well above its special occasion contemporaries.

Saison is one of America's best (and most expensive) restaurants, although Skenes doubts it would have flourished outside of San Francisco.

Known for its landmarks and concentration of tech companies, San Francisco boasts envi-



"Cantonese cuisine is about searching for this perfection in the ingredient, treating it simply so that people can taste the quality of the product. That's what I want in my food: a Californian vibe but that Cantonese simplicity," says chef Brandon Jew on his restaurant Mr. Jiu's in North America's first and largest Chinatown. KASSIE BORRESON

able edible options beyond sourdough bread or Ghirardelli chocolates. From Hog Island's sustainable oysters, RoliRoti's naturally raised crackling-studded porchetta sandwich, the super burrito at La Taqueria, to Boulettes Larder's cannelles that bests those from Bourdeaux, it's hard not to eat well here.

Home to Michelin-christened and James Beard award-winning chefs and restaurants, the Bay Area is credited with fuelling food trends, such as Chez Panisse's local-sustainable-organic movement and the maker-culture fetishized \$4 artisanal toast.

Using local ingredients may be ubiquitous in the region, but



some kitchens are exacting new standards in quality.

Aaron London of AL's Place credits an exclusive farmer-restaurant relationship with Blue Dane Garden's Rose Becker for the flavours in his vegetable-dominant menu.

Thanks to the abundance of farmers markets, Bar Agricole's

Melissa Reitz suspects San Franciscans are comfortable accepting the natural ebbs and flows associated with farm-fresh produce because they already eat that way at home.

In a market saturated with restaurants and skyrocketing rents, London cautions that the cooking has excelled out of ne-

cessity to survive: "You take great product, add in New York City pace and competition, and suddenly we have something that's hard to compete with."

Lazy Bear owner David Barzelay, Food & Wine's Best New Chef 2016, concurs. "You need to have something unique and compelling. Getting the best ingredients is a prerequisite, but you have to use it in a way that speaks to who you are as a chef and what the restaurant is."

Frustrated with the perception that Chinese food is cheap and greasy, Brandon Jew, a third generation Chinese-American, opened Mister Jiu's. He aims to define modern San Francisco Chinese food by amalgamating the traditions and customs of his elders with the flavours from his American upbringing and training.

The recreated Chinese pantry incorporates ingredients such as Calabrian salami from an area charcutier instead of Jinhua ham in the XO sauce. Scallion pancakes are made with sourdough, and roasted beet purée replaces red food colouring in the char siu sauce.

"I want to have people celebrate Chinese food again," he says. "It has the same soul but it's symbolic of the terroir here."

Renée S. Suen was hosted by San Francisco Travel and CityPASS, which did not review or approve this story.

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NOT A TOURIST | A letter from Mark Stachiew in Anguilla

Tennis not just for posh tourists on this island



Over its 21 years of existence, the Anguilla Tennis Academy has helped teach tennis to more than 4,000 kids aged 5 to 17 and some of its most elite athletes have gone on to win athletic scholarships at American universities. RENUKA HARRIGAN

Beneath the impossibly blue skies of the Caribbean paradise of Anguilla, I sat in the shade of a palm tree, watching pairs of teenagers playing tennis on rows of immaculate courts.

These weren't the offspring of well-to-do vacationers. They were local children who were members of the Anguilla Tennis Academy, the fancy-sounding name of an institution that began 21 years ago with the primary goal of making tennis affordable for ordinary Anguillan kids and teaching them all the life lessons that go along with dedicating themselves to becoming good at a sport.

The academy is the brainchild of Michelle Lake who was once a local kid himself but was able to translate his own skill at tennis into a scholarship at an American university. He wants to use the academy to give a new generation of Anguillan kids the chance to have the same opportunity that he did.

I met up with him in Anguilla last month while the academy prepared to host the inaugural Anguilla Cup, an International Tennis Fed-

eration junior tournament brought to the tiny Caribbean island by the Anguilla Tourist Board and organized by Jamaican-Canadian Karl Hale, CEO of Sports Travel Experts and Tournament Director for the Rogers Cup in Toronto.

"I went to school on a tennis scholarship and when I found out you can have your school paid for and your books and everything, I came back in my freshman year to Anguilla and started this program so other kids could go to school because my parents couldn't send me to school," said Lake.

"I had 35 children the first year with three rackets. I would feed the ball and they would hit it and feed the racket down the line and all of those kids would stand in line and wait for that racket to be passed to them," he remembered.

He gave tennis lessons at the island's resorts in exchange for used equipment and before long guests were

giving him their old equipment for the kids. Over time, he was able to build on the generosity of the island's wealthy visitors and with a combination of drive, charm and enthusiasm, he raised the money necessary to start his state-of-the-art tennis academy. He continues to solicit donations to help pay for its operating costs and the loan necessary to finish the school's construction and his dream of building a 2,500-seat stadium nearby.

"I was on the front lines, watching all these children make great sacrifices and that's the motivation for me," Lake told me. "I tell them in life, there is a cost and there is a cause. If the cause is greater than the cost, it must be done. For the Anguilla Tennis Academy, the cause is greater than the cost so \$2 million doesn't matter to me because there is no value that you can put on what I'm seeing here. The changes and the lives I've seen over 21 years, the stories are amazing."



TRAVEL NOTES BUTCH CASSIDY'S BOYHOOD HOME, CONTROVERSIAL DESTINATION PICK & BOY SCOUTS PACK THEIR BADGES

Utah to restore famous outlaw's cabin

Utah state officials are going to spend \$138,000 U.S. to restore a decaying wood cabin in Piute County that has become a tourist spot because it's believed to be the boyhood home of outlaw Butch Cassidy. Cassidy, whose real name was Robert Leroy Parker, was born in Beaver in 1866 and the Parker family did live in the Circleville cabin. It is unknown if Cassidy lived there or if he had already left to live the life of an outlaw. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



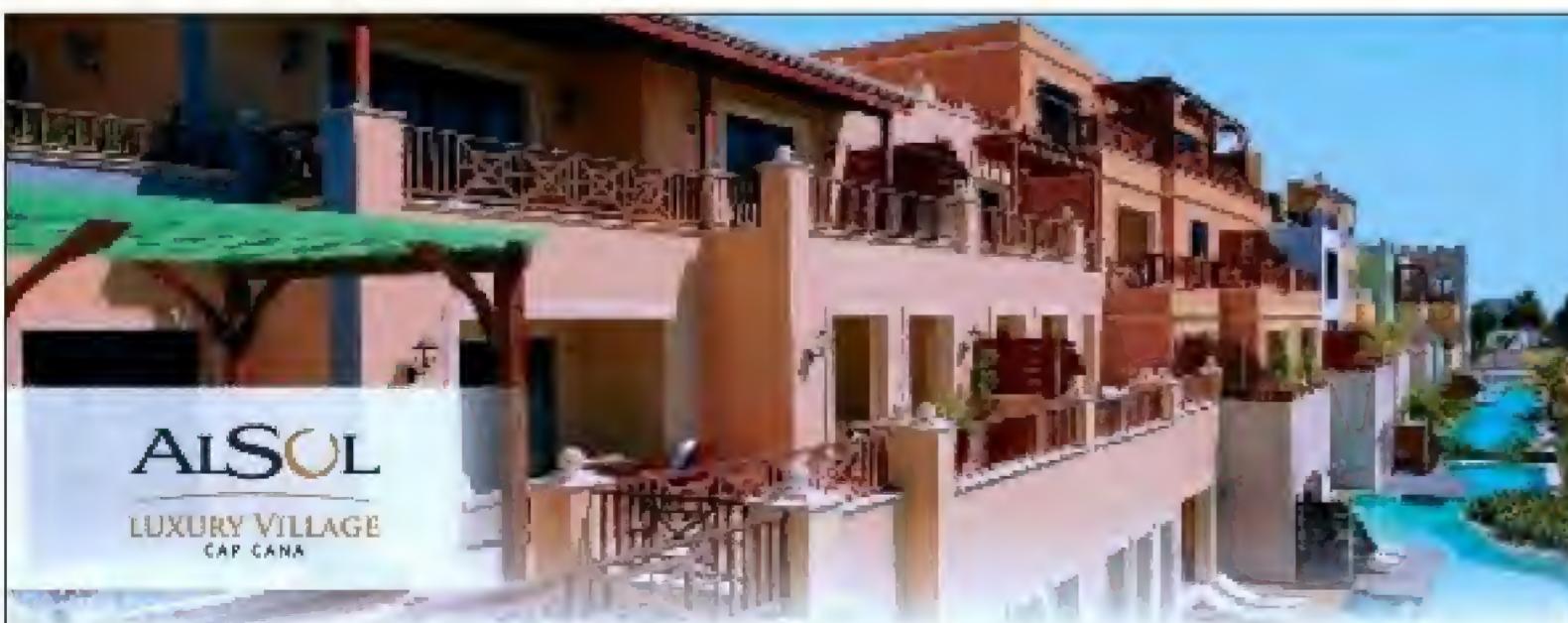
Lonely Planet gives Asheville nod despite state's LGBT law

Lonely Planet has shined its light on Asheville, N.C., as its top U.S. destination for 2017, despite a state law limiting LGBT rights that has led companies, entertainers and others to boycott the state. Lonely Planet gave Asheville the No. 1 slot on its "Best of U.S." list because the city "has always been an open, welcoming place, and continues to be after the legislation." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Boy Scouts to relocate national museum

From merit badges and uniforms to an impressive collection of Norman Rockwell paintings and drawings, the Boy Scouts of America will be packing up more than a century of scouting history and taking it to the wilds of northern New Mexico. The organization will move its national museum from its current home in Texas to the Philmont Scout Ranch. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Spot the stars in L.A.

The City of Angels is a mecca for the hottest workouts around, what with Hollywood starlets and hunks needing to maintain their toned and seemingly ageless bodies. And if you need extra motivation to work out during your next trip to Lalaland, consider that you may just find yourself tapping it back at your SoulCycle class next to David Beckham. Here are your best bets for a getting a great workout with a side of star sightings. **KAREN KWAN/FOR METRO**



Rise up, rise up

Climb your way to being as fit as **Ashley Greene** and **Minka Kelly** at Rise Nation. Working on a VersaClimber in a dark, air-conditioned, nightclub-esque studio with dance music pumping from the speakers, will give you the cardio and leg work you'd get hiking at Runyon Canyon, only it's packed into a 30-minute class and inside from the smog.



Nature's Gym class

Before she gave birth to twins, **Mariah Carey** babymooned at Terranea Resort, a sprawling oceanfront property in Rancho Palos Verdes. While the songstress spent her time there getting pampered at the luxe spa, you can work up a sweat here so you can be red-carpet ready in their Nature's Gym class. This bootcamp will have you running across the resort with stops to work on strength using resistance bands and your own body weight.

YaS YaS, y'all

Get that heart rate up and find your zen moment at YaS, a studio that houses both Spinning and yoga under one roof. Check off your cardio, flexibility and core work all in a one-hour workout--although it might be the excitement of spotting **Kate Hudson**, **Robyn** or **Rosario Dawson** at any one of their four studios in the City of Angels that gets you sweating.



Head for the Hills

Escape the traffic and set out on foot in L.A. for a hike. The second biggest city in the U.S. is home to some great hiking, and you'll want to watch your step as you hike the dog-friendly 4,300-acre Griffith Park and Runyon Canyon because you'll not only spot the Hollywood sign but also some celebs such as **Justin Bieber**, **Zac Efron** and **Dakota Fanning**.



Stars of Wundabar

Take the Pilates reformer, integrate the jump board and chair, and move through your workout at a faster pace, while maintaining the integrity of the exercises (neutral spine, always!) and you've got Wundabar. The brainchild of **Amy Jordan**, Wundabar is just one of the ways stars like Vanessa Hudgens,

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A world of imagination

Meliá Cuba properties offer kids a magical escape

Of Meliá Cuba's 27 hotels, 16 of its all-inclusive Cuban resorts cater to families, offering children and the young at heart a magical, fun-filled getaway. Designed with family budgets in mind, the hotels are located in Cuba's most popular beach destinations, offering such kid-friendly activities as sports, arts and crafts and cooking — both with families and with the resorts' team of professional bilingual monitors.

Next stop: Paradise

Families can indulge at the Paradisus Varadero Resort and Spa with the opening of the new Family Concierge section. This exclusive new addition includes 284 junior suites and suites designed to impress those looking for the ultimate in luxury accommodations. Forty of the rooms have direct access to the pool along with a private garden terrace. The section also features three exclusive gourmet restaurants — along with privileged access to all six à la carte restaurants of the main hotel — as well as bars and pools. Luxurious touches include a baby club and mini club as well as a game room, ensuring that children enjoy their holiday as much as their parents. The specially assigned Family Concierge will help guests during their stay and coordinate services and reservations, so families can concentrate on enjoying themselves. For larger families, Family Suites are available at the resort and Master two-bedroom Suites are available at the Family Concierge.

Discover the Yhi Spa — offering packages designed specially for moms and daughters — as well as exclusive Watsu treatments. Not to be outdone, the Meliá Peninsula Varadero offers a Family Section like no other, with a baby and mini club, a pool for kids and a game room, and its Family Suites that can accommodate up to six people.

Fun for everyone

Multi-generational families will feel at home at the Meliá Las Dunas in Cayo Santa María, which features a distinctive adults-only section as well as a family section with a kids-only pool and a baby, mini and teenage club. The resort also boasts a Yhi Spa, complete with a modern gym, climbing wall and four tennis courts. Surrounded by lush gardens, the beach hosts a gazebo, making this resort an excellent option for weddings and the renewal of vows.

Located directly on the beach in Cayo Coco, the very modern Meliá Jardines del Rey is home to a wide array of activities, six restaurants and sumptuous gardens. With its newly enlarged and improved beach, this property is sure to please beach lovers. For those who prefer a more active holiday, this hotel also offers a mini club and a game room, as well as a kids-only pool — a smart choice for families.

Further down the coast in Holguín, the Sol Río de Luna y Mares resort faces the turquoise beach of Playa Esmeralda. Its location is stunning, nestled among lush gardens and just steps away from Cuba's top aquarium. Explore these and other unforgettable resorts at meliacuba.com.



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The best books to look into

READING ROUNDUP

Page-turning gifts to suit everyone on Santa's list

Tanya Enberg

With traditional books experiencing a resurgence, this holiday season give loved ones the gift of a good read they can curl up with. This round up of 2016 titles is sure to please little bookworms, lifelong word lovers, and every type of reader in between.

For children

The Darkest Dark, Chris Hadfield

Tundra, \$22.99

Ages 4-8

Inspired by astronaut Chris Hadfield as a child, *The Darkest Dark* tells the story of young Chris, who is brave pretending to be an astronaut, however when bedtime arrives, so does his biggest fear — darkness. After watching the Apollo 11 moon landing on TV, Chris discovers beauty in the unknown — even when it's at its darkest.

The Barefoot Book of Children, Tessa Strickland and Kate DePalma, illustrated by David Dean
Barefoot Books

(available at barefootbooks.com) \$24.99
Ages 3-8

The Barefoot Book of Children takes readers on an imaginative and insightful trip around the world, with compassionate lessons about feelings, families, bodies and food. This kid-empowering book inspires curiosity and helps children gain a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them. *They All Saw a Cat*, **Brendan Wenzel** Chronicle Books, \$23.99

Ages 3-5

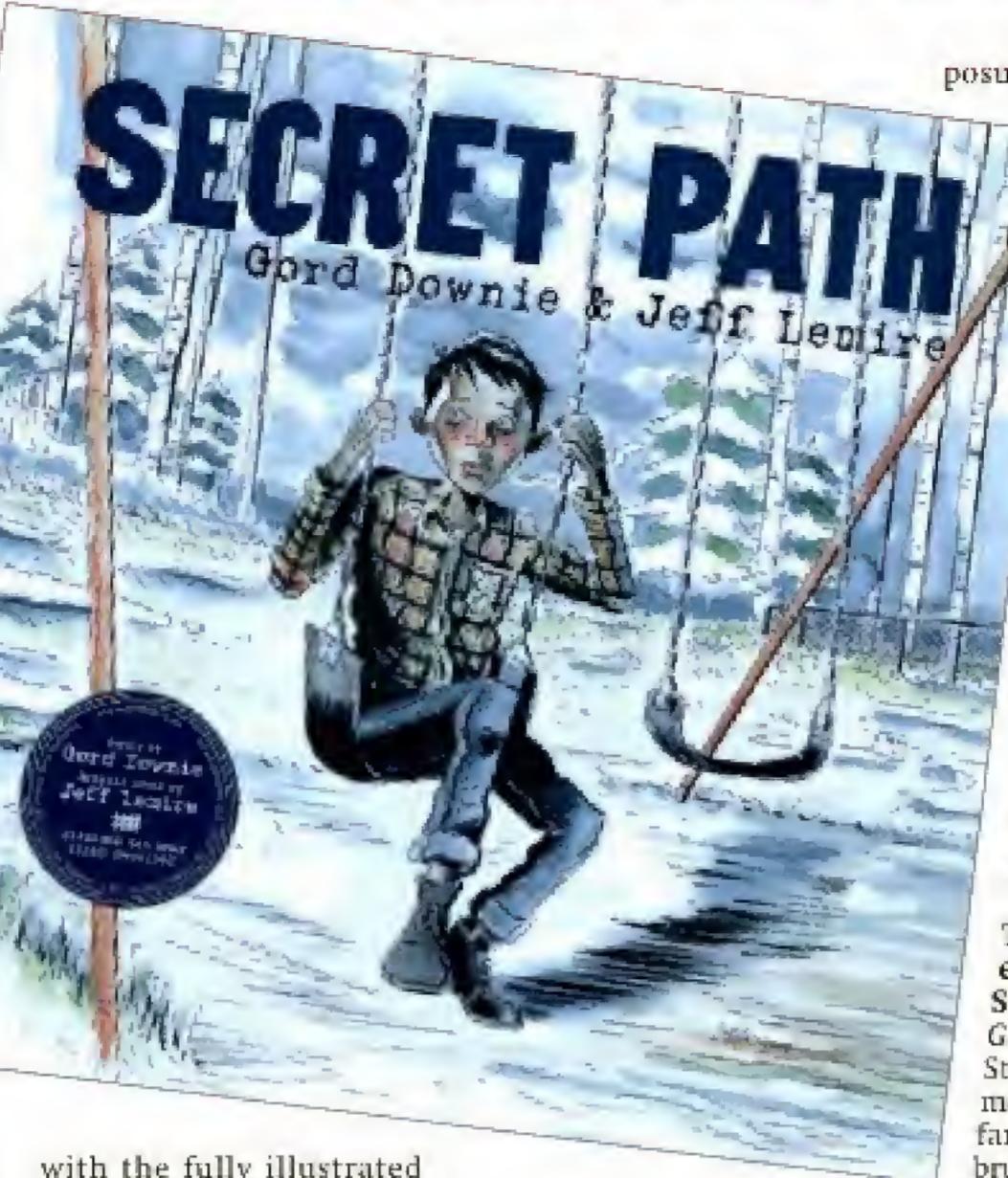
With whimsical drawings and lyrical prose, *They All Saw a Cat* is simple and smart. The New York Times best-seller follows a cat whose features transform as it is seen through the eyes of various creatures. From the perspective of a terrified mouse to a bat's night vision, this is an amusing celebration of observation.

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, J.K. Rowling, illustrated by Jim Kay

Bloomsbury USA, \$49.99

Ages 9+

Take a spellbinding journey into the world of wizards



with the fully illustrated new edition of Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. Bubbling over with magic, humour and beloved characters, this delightful reimagining is a home-library must for Harry Potter fans.

For adults

Faithful, Alice Hoffman

Simon & Schuster, \$32

A car accident leaves a teenage girl in a coma and her best friend dealing with crippling guilt in Alice Hoffman's *Faithful*. High schooler Shelby Richmond downward spirals as she struggles with survivor's guilt and tries to move on.

The Wonder,
Emma Donoghue

HarperCollins Canada, \$32.99

Set in a small 1850s Irish village, locals and out-of-towners become captivated by the miraculous story of a girl who is said to have survived for months without food. The child also draws skeptics and is placed under the watch of a nurse determined to reveal whether she is a medical miracle or fraud.

The Couple Next Door, Shari Lapena

Doubleday Canada, \$24.95, paperback

From the first page, suspense unfolds when Anne and Marco Conti return home to find their front door open and an empty crib where their baby should be in the unsettling thriller, *The Couple Next Door*. The parents fall under suspicion, tension rises and secrets are revealed with each shocking twist and turn.

Secret Path,
Gord Downie

Simon & Schuster, \$26.99

Singer Gord Downie brings to light the mistreatment of children at residential schools with *Secret Path*, a 10-song album featuring a graphic novel by Jeff Lemire. It tells the story of Chanie "Charlie" Wenjack, a 12-year-old boy who died of hunger and ex-

posure after running away from a Kenora, Ont. school in 1966 to try and get home.

The Best Kind of People, Zoe Whittall

House of Anansi Press, \$22.95, paperback

When a bombshell accusation of sexual impropriety is brought against George Woodbury, a beloved teacher, husband and father, his family is left to cope with denial and anger — and the possibility of guilt — in the heart-breaking book, *The Best Kind of People*.

The Girl with the Lower Back Tattoo, Amy Schumer

Gallery Books, \$36.99

Star comedian Amy Schumer shares stories of love, family and friendship, all brushed with her signature dry humor in this confessional collection of essays. Schumer's sassiness is evident throughout, but she also delves into deeper terrain, too, opening up about her father's

multiple sclerosis and ending gun violence.

Cookbooks

Small Victories: Recipes, Advice + Hundreds of Ideas for Home-Cooking Triumphs, Julia Turshen Chronicle Books, \$50

Small Victories is brimming with culinary inspiration for seasoned and beginner home cooks. Featuring more than 400 recipes, from turkey and Ricotta meatballs to peach and bourbon milkshakes, the pages are filled with flavours for all occasions.

Green Kitchen Smoothies: Healthy and Colorful Smoothies for Every Day, David Frenkiel and Luise Vindahl

Hardie Grant, \$27.99

Whether seeking an energy boost or wanting to sneak more veggies into your child's diet, *Green Kitchen Smoothies* shines with fresh ideas, from orange sesame smoothies to the deceptively healthy cacao-rich banana Snickers shake. Get ready to salivate — and bust out the blender.

Oh She Glows Every Day: Quick and Satisfying Plant-Based Recipes, Angela Liddon

Penguin Canada, \$32

Oakville based Angela Liddon is back with a collection of recipes so fresh, you'll feel healthier just flipping through the pages. Teeming with yummy, family-approved ideas (think eggplant Parmesan and stuffed avocado salad), Liddon's creations are quick, easy and immensely tempting.

All books listed are hardcover unless otherwise noted. Prices may vary, retailer dependent.





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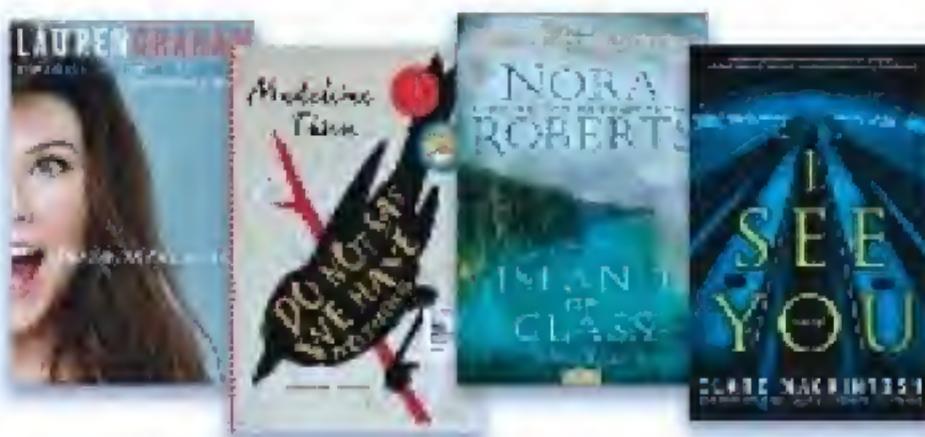
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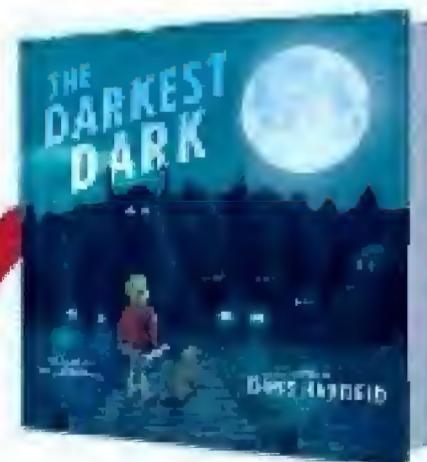


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Tech it out: Hot gadget gift ideas

RECOMMENDATIONS

Not sure what to buy your loved ones over the holidays?

Marc Saltzman

Some advice for those about to start their holiday shopping: Don't buy clothes for someone else — they may smile and thank you for the lime green cardigan but they'll hunt for the gift receipt when they get home. Lottery tickets and gift cards are cop-outs. Jewelry is too personal to pick out. And don't even think about fancy bath soaps (they still haven't used what you bought them last year).

Instead, if you want to see a genuine smile stretch upon the faces of loved ones, buy them some cool technology. And no, you don't need to break the bank to pick great gadget gifts. So, whether you're in need of high-tech ideas or want to indulge in something for yourself, here are a few sweet suggestions.

Nintendo NES Classic Edition: Sold out across the country, but with Santa's elves working on more before Christmas Eve, the Nintendo NES Classic Edition (\$79.99) lets you relive some of your beloved childhood video games on your big-screen TV.

This mini version of the iconic Nintendo Entertainment System houses 30 pre-installed eight-bit classics of yes-



teryear, such as Super Mario Bros, Donkey Kong, The Legend of Zelda, PAC-MAN, Metroid, Mega Man, and Final Fantasy.

The teeny console also ships with a full-size NES Classic Controller, plus you can add a second for two-player fun (sold separately for \$12.99), and it also includes an HDMI cable to plug into a television.



Along with its integrated heart-rate monitor and multiple sports mode, a new feature called Route Exploration lets runners plan and upload up to 15 routes to their watch, and then follow along on the screen.



Elektronista Digital Clutch: Women on the go can carry their tech with style. Available in multiple colours, Knomo's Elektronista Digital Clutch (\$199 to \$299) fits up to a 10-inch tablet, as well as other items such as your wallet, keys, smartphone, earbuds, and hand cream, in multiple sections and zipped pockets for easy access to



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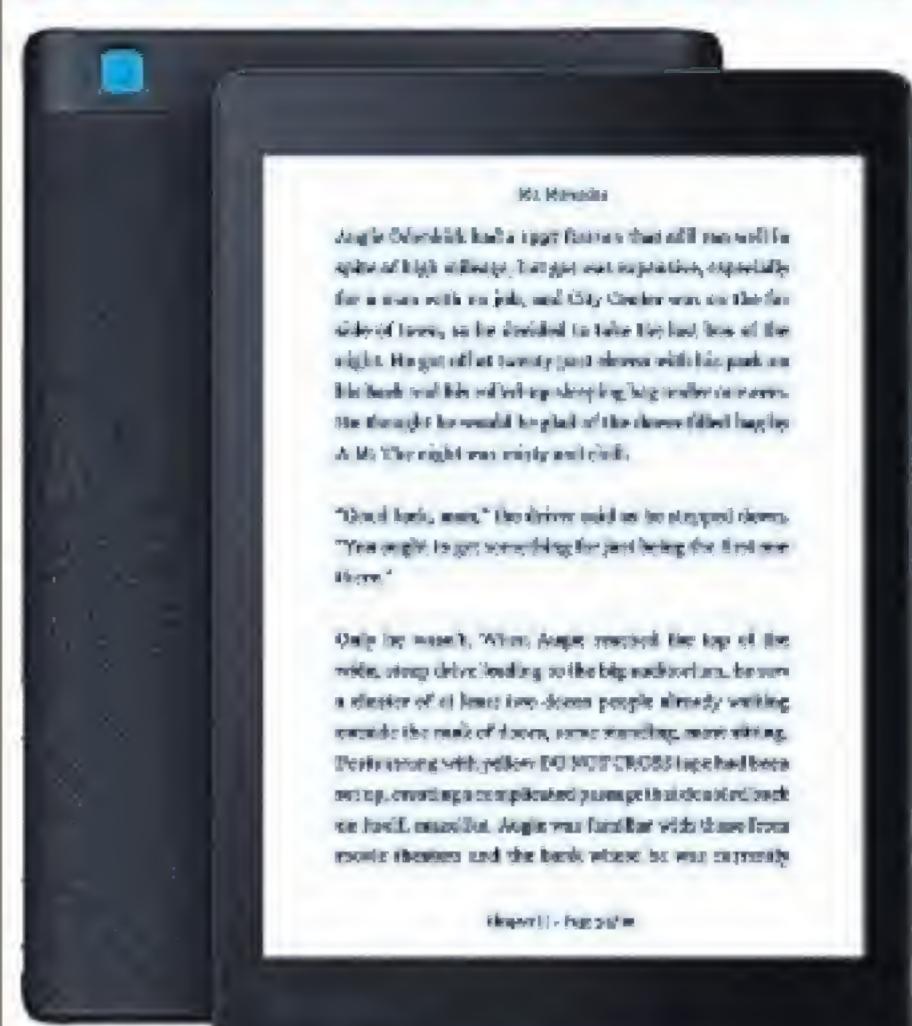
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Angie Oberholzer had a 1997 Subaru that still ran well in spite of high mileage. But gas was expensive, especially for a man with no job, and Angie was on the far side of town, so he decided to take the last bus of the night. He got off at twenty past eleven with his pack on his back and his sleeping bag rolled in a mess. He thought he would be glad of the down-filled bag by 8 a.m. The night was cold and dark.

"Thank God, man," the driver said as he stopped down. "You ought to get something for just being the first one there."

Only by chance. When Angie reached the top of the ridge, along drove leading to the big subdivision, he saw a cluster of at least two dozen people already walking inside the park of houses, some running, some riding. The first song with yellow DO NOT CROSS tape had been set up, covering a complicated jump that had to be checked on foot, usually. Angie was familiar with those from movie theaters and the back roads he was currently

driving to. —P.J. O'Rourke

your stuff. Built into this clutch is a 5,000-millamp power pack, with microUSB charging cable, so you can juice up your smartphone when needed (roughly twice, depending on the model).

TP-Link Touch P5 Router: This wireless router works as well as it looks. The TP-Link Touch P5 (\$199.99) is a touch-screen-enabled WiFi Gigabit Router with A C 1 9 0 0 speeds for fast and reliable performance, for all your home's wireless devices: computers, tablets, smartphones, printers, video game consoles, smart TVs, and more. Along with the one-minute set-up, the touchscreen also lets you enable parental controls, if desired; set up dual bands to minimize interference (2.4GHz and 5GHz); and it also works with an optional smartphone app to tweak settings and permissions.

Samsung Gear 360: Rethink how holiday moments are captured and shared with the Samsung Gear 360 (\$499.99), a compact camera that can shoot 360-degree video (or photos), which can then be played back on virtual reality headsets, or as an interactive 360-degree video on YouTube or Facebook. It's never been easier (or cheaper) to create content — perfect for family vacations, holiday get-togethers and other once-in-a-lifetime events — you may want to relive time and time again after the fact.

Kobo Aura One: What to buy an avid book lover who might want to read everywhere life takes them? The Kobo Aura One (\$249) is a premium ebook reader with a large 7.8-inch display, about the size of a hardcover book, and with a high-resolution e-ink screen that looks like real ink on paper. Whether you want to lounge around the pool, at a beach, on a deck at the cottage, or while slipping into a bubble bath, the latest Kobo is IPX8-certified, which means it can remain underwater as deep as two metres, or 6.5 feet, for up to 60 minutes. The anti-glare e-ink screen can be read clearly in bright sunlight, or take advantage of the integrated light to read while curled up in bed. The Kobo eBook store features more than five million titles, plus you can borrow ebooks for free from your local library. Battery life lasts a month between charges. Product prices may vary.

FROM TOP, LEFT PAGE:
NINTENDO NES CLASSIC EDITION; ELEKTRONISTA DIGITAL CLUTCH; SAMSUNG GEAR 360; KOBO AURA ONE; TOMTOM SPARK 3; TP-LINK TOUCH P5 ROUTER

The NHL plans to stick with the name and logo of the Vegas Golden Knights after U.S. patent authorities denied the club's trademark request

Hot Flyers rally past Oilers

NHL

Edmonton the latest victim in Philly's 7-game winning streak

Michael Raffl scored with 1:29 remaining to cap Philadelphia's rally from two goals down in a 6-5 victory over the Edmonton Oilers on Thursday night for the Flyers' seventh straight win.

Claude Giroux had two goals and one assist, and Mark Streit, Pierre-Edouard Bellemare and Jakub Voracek also scored for the Flyers. Steve Mason stopped 28 shots to win his sixth straight and improve to 11-8-3.

Leon Draisaitl had a goal and two assists, Connor McDavid had a goal and an assist, and Andrej Sekera, Benoit Pouliot and Oscar Klefbom also scored for the Oilers, who have blown leads in four straight games. Jonas Gustavsson finished with 25 saves.

Raffl's sixth of the season came after he brushed off a check by Klefbom and lifted a shot over Gustavsson. The Flyers trailed 5-3 before scoring three times in a 12-minute stretch.

With the score tied 3-3 after two periods, Pouliot and Klefbom scored 2:05 apart to give



Oilers centre Connor McDavid takes a shot on goal against Flyers goaltender Steve Mason as Pierre-Edouard Bellemare and Andrew MacDonald defend on Thursday night in Philadelphia. ROBB CARR/GETTY IMAGES

THURSDAY In Philly

6 FLYERS	5 OILERS
--------------------	--------------------

the Oilers a two-goal lead 5:12 into the third.

Voracek's snap shot on a power play pulled the Flyers to 5-4 at 6:31 and Giroux tied it with 7:49 remaining.

McDavid was back in Philadelphia for the first time since breaking a collar bone here last season after a collision with Flyers defenceman Brandon

Manning, an injury that forced him to miss the next 37 games in his rookie campaign. The

two had a minor scuffle in the first period.

The Oilers, who came into the game fourth in the NHL in goals, opened the scoring when Draisaitl beat Mason from the left circle at the 4:39 mark of the first.

McDavid made it 2-0 at 4:35 of the second with his first power-play goal of the season.

The Flyers took over midway through the second period, scoring three goals on three shots in a span of just 1:12 to take a 3-2 lead.

Fifty-three seconds later, Bellemare tied it with his first of the season.

The Oilers play in Minnesota on Friday night.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL IN BRIEF

Owners still reluctant on approving Olympics

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman says owners aren't keen on returning to a sixth consecutive Olympics.

Following the first day of the NHL's board of governors meetings on Thursday afternoon, Bettman said there was "strong negative sentiment" among the league's owners on NHL players attending the PyeongChang Games in 2018.

No vote was taken among the governors with respect to the Olympics.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Price loses cool as Habs prevail over Devils

Carey Price lost his temper after being bumped twice in his crease but made 19 saves to win the game as the Canadiens defeated the New Jersey Devils 5-2 on Thursday in Montreal.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pens win fourth straight

Sidney Crosby got his 18th goal and added an assist to lead the Pittsburgh Penguins over the Florida Panthers 5-1 on Thursday.

The Penguins have won four straight and five of their past six.

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Have fighting spirit, will travel



Canadian mixed martial artist has honed craft across the globe



Jason Saggo always comes home ... eventually.

The Toronto native has returned to familiar turf this week for his first ever outing in the city where he was born.

The UFC lightweight contender has been a professional mixed martial artist for more than seven years now, so this homecoming has taken its time getting here.

Then again, Saggo's friends and family have long since learned not to wait out for him.

The 31-year-old is a full-time fighter. He's also a deep thinker. Most of all, though, he's a natural-born wanderer. The combat sports bug may have bitten hard in his university days but the travel bug dug its

teeth in deeper still.

So Saggo has combined the two on his long, winding journey to here, a slot on the UFC's first pay-per-view event in Canada in over a year and with it an opportunity to take his career to the next level.

It's been some trek, though. Saggo has traversed 5,000 kilometres of Thailand by motorbike, backpacked Brazil before floating down the Amazon, trod across India and then got back on the bike to conquer Vietnam. There's been plenty more destinations in between. But all stop-off points had one thing in common — diving deeper into his sport.

"People ask me are you a fighter or are you a martial artist, those have two very different meanings," Saggo told Metro.

The connotations are way apart, people say you're a fighter and assume things. Whereas you say you're a martial artist, which is where I feel I'm coming at it, I'm not in there because I enjoy hurting people. I enjoy the challenge of going in there and understanding the depth

of the technique.

"It's just with me, I love travelling. It's always been a part who I am. The more I can get to see other places and other cultures, that's what I want to be doing."

His dual passions help feed the body and the mind.

"They do, and you're feeding the soul too, right?" says the psychology and philosophy graduate. "Travelling is food for the soul. All the people I have met through training and martial arts around the world have always been incredible people.

When you're training with guys who literally have your life in their hands, you have to have enormous trust. There's a bond that has to be there. It's almost like a family."

On Saturday, Saggo faces Rustam Khabilov, the most daunting assignment of his fighting life to date. The Dagestanian carries a 20-3 record into the Air Canada Centre and has already won three times this year.

Saggo, however, is on the brink of racking up a third triumph of his own this year.

"I wanted to go 3-0 and

fight in Vegas," he said. "I'm almost there, I went to Vegas and got the win in the first round, no damage.

"Second fight was a tough fight but I beat him. And now I'm fighting a tough guy. He's upper echelon, so for me to beat a guy of his calibre would be a huge jump in my career."

Charlottetown is where Saggo hangs his hat these days, having moved there with his girlfriend four years ago.

The relative seclusion of Prince Edward Island appealed to someone who knew plenty of it having worked as forest firefighter in B.C. and tree planter in northern Ontario.

In unsettled times for Canadian UFC fighters — Georges St-Pierre very much in exile and Rory MacDonald departed — Saggo is eager to fill the void.

"They need someone to step up and represent for Canadian fighters," he said. "This is a huge opportunity, this is why for me to go 3-0 this year would be a huge step. It would put me up there as the top Canadian fighter in the 155-pound division, would be a career high."

The journey continues.



Toronto native Jason Saggo takes on Rustam Khabilov on Saturday night. EDUARDO LIMA/METRO

IN BRIEF

Griffin III back for Browns
RG3's getting his second shot with the Browns.

Robert Griffin III
Robert Griffin III, who hasn't played since injuring his shoulder in the Sept. 11 season opener at Philadelphia, will start Sunday against the Cincinnati Bengals as the winless Browns (0-12) try to avoid becoming the second team in NFL history to go 0-16.

Griffin hasn't played since breaking a shoulder bone three months ago.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



GETTY IMAGES

SWIMMING

Oleksiak beats her own 100m record

Olympic star Penny Oleksiak won bronze in the 100-metre freestyle at the world short course swimming championships Thursday in Windsor, Ont.

The 16-year-old from Toronto finished in third in 52.01 seconds, lowering her own Canadian record for the third time at the meet. Oleksiak, who won gold in the event at last summer's Olympics, broke her Canadian record in Wednesday's heats and semifinals.

The medal was Canada's fourth of the meet.

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Penny Oleksiak

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MAKE IT TONIGHT

Zesty Lemon Orzo Soup



Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

This zingy recipe yields a lot of soup, which is good news since it tastes even better the next day.

Ready in 30 minutes

Prep time: 5
Cook time: 25
Serves 6

Ingredients

- 8 cups low-sodium chicken stock
- 1 cup orzo
- 1/2 lb of skinless, boneless chicken breast, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 3 eggs
- 1/3 cup of lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Small handful of parsley, chopped

Directions

- In large pot, bring stock to a boil. Add the orzo and reduce heat just slightly so it simmers 10 minutes.
- Now add the chicken to the pot with the stock and orzo and simmer for 10 more minutes.
- While that's cooking away, crack your eggs into a bowl and whisk in the lemon juice. Using a ladle, scoop out some hot broth and add small of stream to your egg mixture while whisking. Add as much hot stock as it takes to really warm up the egg so it won't scramble in the soup.
- Now pour your egg mixture into your soup pot. Cook for another 2 or 3 minutes or until it thickens slightly. Season to taste. Serve with a sprinkle of chopped parsley.

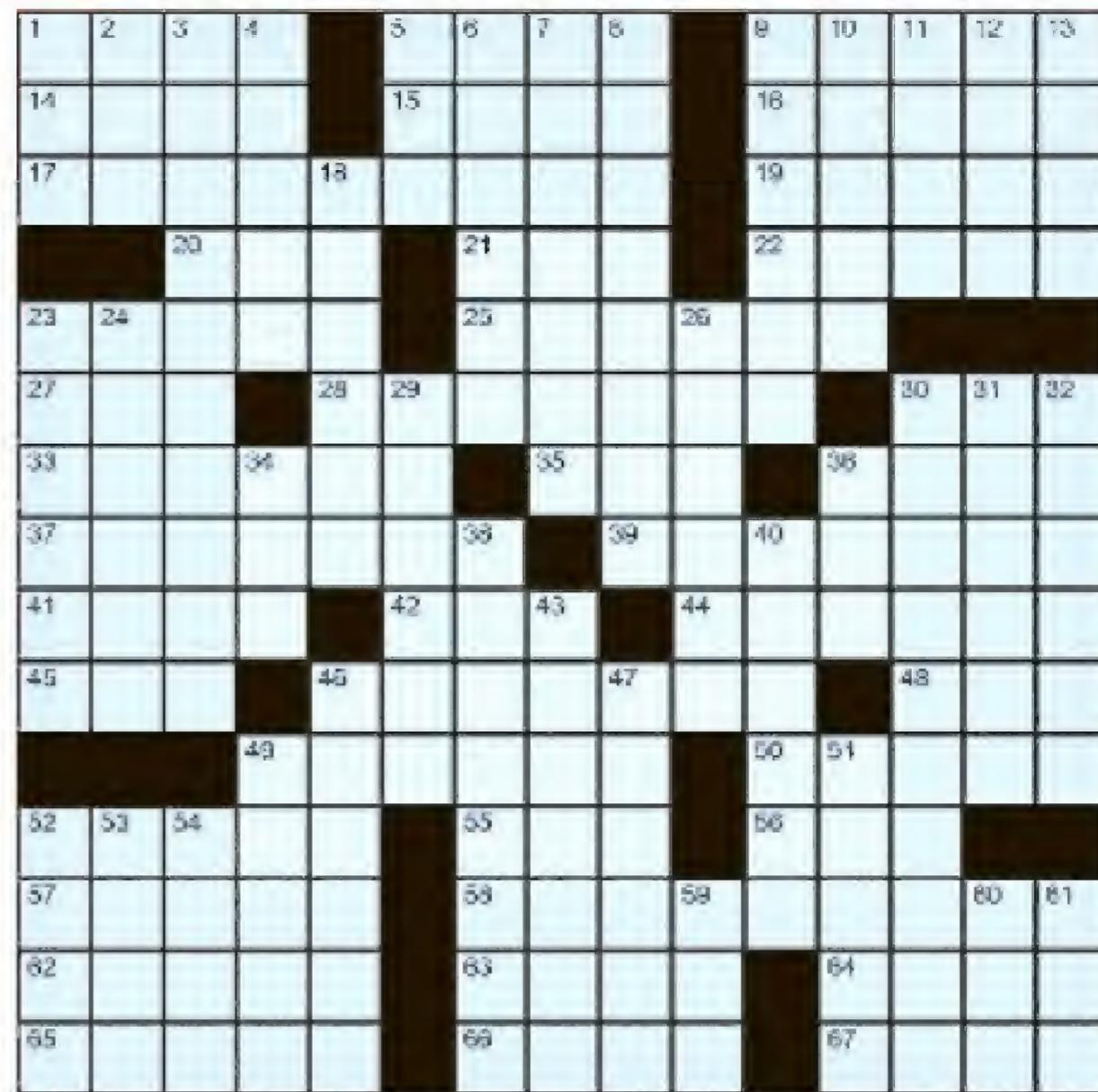
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ACROSS

- Davy Crockett portrayer Mr. Parker
- Fashion
- 'Speak' like Shakespeare
- Italian harp
- Singleton
- Album
- Flexibility
- James Bond portrayer Mr. Moore
- "... thousand times."
- US lawyers' org.
- A-List
- Exasperated expletives!
- "Pretty good!" 2 wds.
- Ms. Gardner who was married to Frank Sinatra
- Salt
- "Come again?"
- Empty- (Parent whose kids have flown the coop)
- Theological sch.
- Window piece
- Debit card service in Canada
- Island of Indonesia
- Put a lawyer to work
- Bathroom water source
- Many call it football
- Feminine pronoun
- Obtained, as consumer goods
- Fedora, for one
- CBC's "Rick Report"
- Canadian painter Ms. Carr
- Prank
- Or Ardon: A Family Chronicle (1969 Vladimir Nabokov novel)
- Shiny Happy People" r.o.c.k.e.r.s.
- Was inclined, like Pisa the Tower
- "Today" on NBC co-anchor Ms. Guthrie,
- and namesakes
- Venetian traveler Mr. Polo
- Salt Lake City's state
- High-fiving sound
- Ranch animal
- Greyish



DOWN

- Flight watch-dog org.
- Energy unit
- Toronto-based toymaker of the flying-off-the-shelves toys at #30-Down: 2 wds.
- Beauty parlor
- Pre-Tue. day
- "... Only" by Adele
- Coureurs (Canoe-travelling fur traders of the woods in New France)
- Substitutes
- Banquet
- Get _ of (Contact)

- Boo Boo's cartoon pal
- Leave in, in proofreading
- Ripped
- 1963 hit for The Essex: " _ Said Than Done"
- Particular pastry
- Toronto thoroughfare, _ Road
- Confuse
- Public speaker
- The must-have toys of Christmas 2016
- Fanciful
- Robust
- Mr. Danson of "Cheers"
- BC's I'll ocean
- Mountain chain in Eurasia
- " _ Family" (ABC comedy)
- Antecede
- Sphere
- Dapper piece of neckwear
- Festive fare, _ pies
- Smart people's gr.
- Donations
- Shipshape
- Weight allowance
- Sneeze-starting sounds...
- "Very funny"
- Undercover agent

*IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20

This is the perfect day to make travel plans, because you are excited and enthusiastic. Don't hesitate to explore opportunities in publishing, the media, medicine and the law.

Taurus April 21 - May 21

This is an excellent day for discussions about shared property, inheritances and how to deal with taxes and debt. You might end up laughing all the way to the bank.

Gemini May 22 - June 21

Relations with partners and close friends are friendly and upbeat today. This is a wonderful day to enjoy the company of others. Get out and schmooze!

Cancer June 22 - July 23

You want to do your very best on the job today because you are positive-minded and happy about your work. Work-related travel also is likely.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23

This is a great day to meet others for a fun, social occasion. Enjoy the arts, sports events, playful activities with children and romantic liaisons.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23

Family discussions will go well today. This is a particularly good day to discuss real estate negotiations or how to share or divide something with a family member.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23

Writers and salespeople will be successful today, because it's easy for Librans to be positive-minded. And we all know about the power of positive thinking!

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22

Business and commerce are favored today. Look for ways to expand your earnings. You also might see ways to make money on the side or even get a better job.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21

You're happy today. That's because your ruler, Jupiter, is dancing beautifully with the Sun in your sign. Yes, it doesn't get much better than this!

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20

It's easy to feel content in life today because you are quietly happy. You feel confident; furthermore, you feel positive about your future. (And you should.)

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 18

This is a popular day for Aquarians! Enjoy hanging out with friends. You also will enjoy all of your exchanges with people in groups, clubs, classes and associations.

Pisces

Feb. 20 - March 20
Because you make a fabulous impression on others today, go after what you want. Now is the day to put forth your agenda with bosses and parents.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

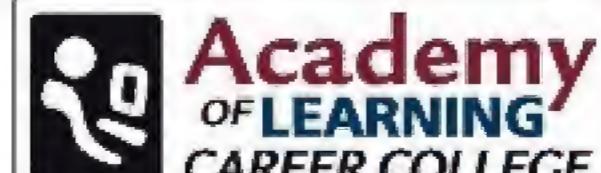
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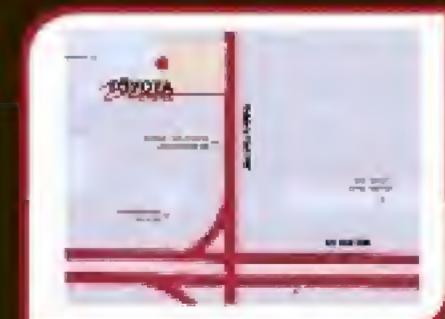
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